

MESSIAH
LUTHERAN
CHURCH  
CELEBRATING 125 YEARS

Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 15, 2026
8:30 a.m.



Senior Pastor Kurt Hoover
Organist & Pianist Rose Ann Sochan
Sanctuary Choir Director Herb Alexander
Worship Assistants Herb Alexander, Jane Costello

40 Houbolt Rd.
Joliet, IL 60431

(815) 741-4488
www.mlcjoliet.org

Welcome to Messiah Lutheran Church

March 15, 2026

8:30 a.m.

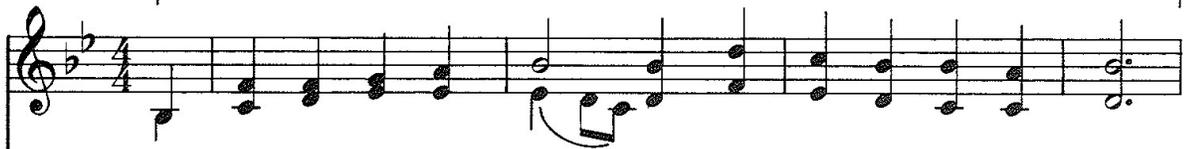
Enter Reverently, Worship Joyfully, Live Faithfully

PRELUDE

Rose Ann Sochan

OPENING HYMN

"All Glory, Laud and Honor," #173 v. 1-3



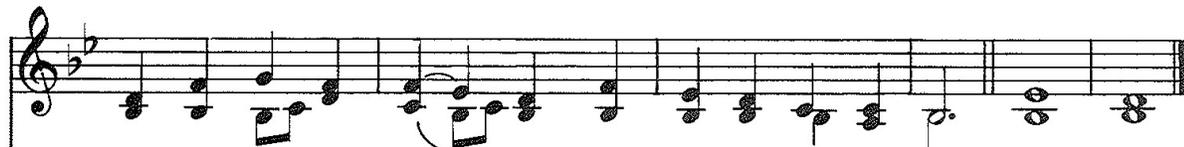
1. All glo - ry, laud and hon - or To Thee, Re - deem - er, King,
2. The com - pa - ny of an - gels Are prais - ing Thee on high,
3. To Thee, be - fore Thy pas - sion, They sang their hymns of praise;



To whom the lips of chil - dren Made sweet ho - san - nas ring: Thou
And mor - tal men and all things Cre - at - ed make re - ply: The
To Thee, now high ex - alt - ed, Our mel - o - dy we raise: Thou



art the King of Is - rael, Thou Da - vid's roy - al Son, Who
peo - ple of the He - brews With palms be - fore Thee went: Our
didst ac - cept their prais - es— Ac - cept the praise we bring, Who



in the Lord's name com - est, The King and bless - ed One!
praise and prayer and an - thems Be - fore Thee we pre - sent.
in all good de - light - est, Thou good and gra - cious King! A - men.

BOLD LITANY ADAPTED FROM PSALM 138

Leader: I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart;

All: before the "gods" I will sing your praise.

Leader: I will bow down toward your holy temple and will praise your name

All: for your unfailing love and your faithfulness.

Leader: When I called, you answered me;

All: you greatly emboldened me.

Leader: Though the Lord is exalted, he looks kindly on the lowly;

All: though lofty, he sees them from afar.

Leader: We worship You Lord in the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

SANCTUARY CHOIR ANTHEM

"Lamb of God," arr. Lloyd Larson,
led by Herb Alexander

HYMN OF PRAISE

"Lead Me to Calvary," #176 v. 1-4



1. King of my life, I crown Thee now, Thine shall the glo - ry be;
2. Show me the tomb where Thou wast laid, Ten - der-ly mourned and wept;
3. Let me like Ma - ry, through the gloom, Come with a gift to Thee;
4. May I be will - ing, Lord, to bear Dai - ly my cross for Thee;

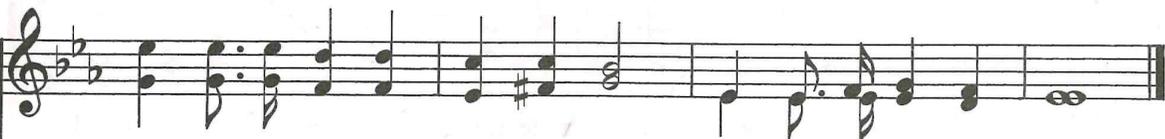


Lest I for-get Thy thorn crowned brow, Lead me to Cal - va - ry.
An - gels in robes of light ar - rayed Guard-ed Thee whilst Thou slept.
Show to me now the emp - ty tomb, Lead me to Cal - va - ry.
E - ven Thy cup of grief to share, Thou hast borne all for me.

Refrain



Lest I for-get Geth - sem - a - ne; Lest I for-get Thine ag - o - ny;



Lest I for-get Thy love for me, Lead me to Cal - va - ry.

HYMN OF PRAISE

"The Greatest Thing," #311 v. 1-3, *Maranatha*

1. The great-est thing _____ in all my life is know - ing you. _____
 2. The great-est thing _____ in all my life is lov - ing you. _____
 3. The great-est thing _____ in all my life is serv - ing you. _____

The great-est thing _____ in all my life is
 The great-est thing _____ in all my life is
 The great-est thing _____ in all my life is

know - ing you. _____ I want to know You
 lov - ing you. _____ I want to love You
 serv - ing you. _____ I want to serve You

more. I want to know You more. The
 more. I want to love You more. The
 more. I want to serve You more. The

great-est thing _____ in all my life is know - ing you.
 great-est thing _____ in all my life is lov - ing you.
 great-est thing _____ in all my life is serv - ing you.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Leader: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

A MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER AND REFLECTION

Leader: Holy and Gracious God,

All: I confess that I have sinned against you this day and every day. Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to You. In the name of Jesus Christ I ask forgiveness. Deliver and restore me, that I may rest in peace and live each day for You.

Leader: By the mercy of God we are united with Jesus Christ, and in Him we are forgiven. We rest now in His peace and rise every morning to serve Him. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Leslie McFarland

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Rose Ann Sochan

RESPONSE

Doxology #625



Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow; Praise Him, all crea - tures here be - low;



Praise Him a -bove, ye heav'n-ly host; Praise Fa-ther, Son and Ho-ly Ghost. A - men.

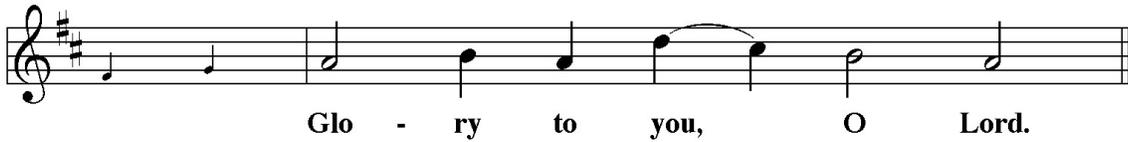
FIRST LESSON, Acts 8:14-25 (ESV)

Reader: Angie Mitchka

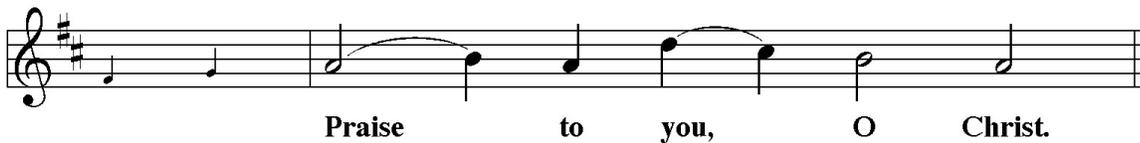
¹⁴ Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, ¹⁵ who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, ¹⁶ for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, ¹⁹ saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." ²⁰ But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! ²¹ You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. ²² Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³ For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." ²⁴ And Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me."

²⁵ Now when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

SECOND LESSON, Acts 13:4-12 (ESV)



⁴ So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. ⁵ When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them. ⁶ When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they came upon a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus. ⁷ He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. ⁸ But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. ⁹ But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him ¹⁰ and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord?" ¹¹ And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time." Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. ¹² Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.



MESSAGE

"Bold Prayers: False Prophets"

Pastor Kurt Hoover

A manuscript for this sermon and those previous can be found in the Narthex.

HYMN

"My Song Is Love Unknown," #91 v. 1-2, LCMS

1 My song is love un - known, My Sav - ior's love to
 2 He came from his blest throne Sal - va - tion to be -
 3 Some - times they strew his way And his sweet prais - es
 4 Why, what hath my Lord done? What makes this rage and

me, Love to the love - less shown That they might love - ly
 stow; But men made strange, and none The longed-for Christ would
 sing; Re - sound - ing all the day Ho - san - nas to their
 spite? He made the lame to run, He gave the blind their

be. Oh, who am I That for my sake
 know. But, oh, my friend, My friend in - deed,
 King. Then "Cru - ci - fy!" Is all their breath,
 sight. Sweet in - ju - ries! Yet they at these

 My Lord should take Frail flesh and die?
 Who at my need His life did spend!
 And for his death They thirst and cry.
 Them - selves dis - please And 'gainst him rise.

WORDS OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into Heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Servers: Paul Allen, Bev Korby, Joy McClintock

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.



HYMN

"Lamb of God"



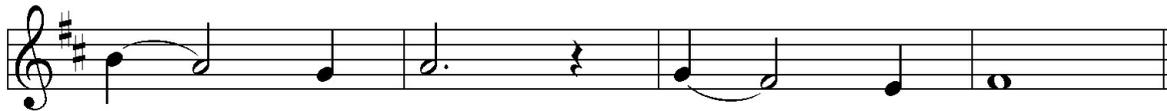
☐ Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN

"Amazing Grace," #202 v. 1-5



- 1. A - maz - ing grace! how sweet the sound—That saved a wretch like me!
- 2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my fears re - lieved;
- 3. The Lord has prom-ised good to me, His word my hope se - cures;
- 4. Thru man-y dan - gers, toils and snares, I have al - read - y come;
- 5. When we've been there ten thou-sand years, Bright shin-ing as the sun,



I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see.
 How pre - cious did that grace ap - pear The hour I first be - lieved.
 He will my shield and por - tion be As long as life en - dures.
 'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home.
 We've no less days to sing God's praise Than when we'd first be - gun.

COMMUNION HYMN

"Let Us Break Bread Together," #323 v. 1-3

1. Let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees; (on our knees;)
2. Let us drink the cup to - geth - er on our knees; (on our knees;)
3. Let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees; (on our knees;)

Let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees; (on our knees;)
Let us drink the cup to - geth - er on our knees; (on our knees;)
Let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees; (on our knees;)

Refrain

When I fall on my knees with my face to the ris - ing sun,

O Lord, have mer - cy on me. (on me.)

COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Thank you Father for the gift of salvation. Thank you Lord Jesus for this holy meal and the sacrifice of Your life. Thank you Holy Spirit for awakening faith within our hearts. We hear your voice in this meal and celebrate Your holy presence. Melt us, mold us, fill us, use us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

BENEDICTION

CLOSING HYMN

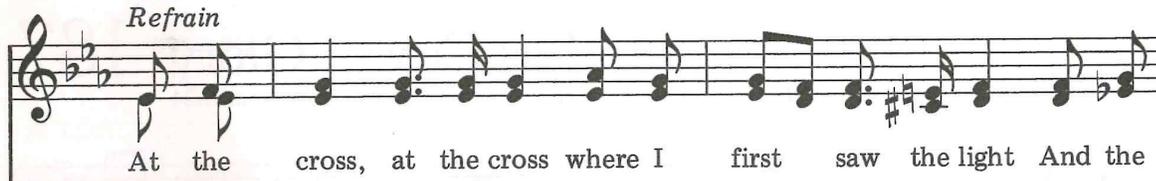
"At the Cross," #188 v. 1-3



1. A - las! and did my Sav - ior bleed? And did my Sov - 'reign die?
2. Was it for crimes that I have done He groaned up - on the tree?
3. Well might the sun in dark-ness hide And shut His glo - ries in,
4. But drops of grief can ne'er re - pay The debt of love I owe:



Would He de - vote that sa - cred head For sin - ners such as I!
A - maz - ing pit - y! grace un-known! And love be - yond de - gree!
When Christ, the might - y Mak - er, died For man the crea - ture's sin.
Here, Lord, I give my - self a - way— 'Tis all that I can do!



At the cross, at the cross where I first saw the light And the



bur - den of my heart rolled a - way— It was there by faith



I re - ceived my sight, And now I am hap - py all the day!

POSTLUDE

Rose Ann Sochan

*God will never lead you to a place
where His grace cannot keep you.*



Coffee Shop Fundraiser

sponsored by our
2026 Chicago Mission Trip Team



Please support our 2026 Mission Trip Team this morning from 8-11 a.m. in Fellowship Hall
as they brew up delicious hot/cold and iced coffees (with special flavors) for your enjoyment!

GET READY FOR OUR CHURCH

★PICTORIAL DIRECTORY★

Be a part of our 2026 church directory! We will be taking pictures of our families for our directory **before and after services on March 22nd and 29th** in the fellowship hall. *(The pictures will only be used for our directory and for our members only).* This will be a great time to confirm the information we have on file.

Our Messiah Quilters will be completing a **Signature Quilt** to celebrate our 125th anniversary. The squares will be next to the photo booth for you to sign before and after the services on March 22nd & 29th.

MESSIAH
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

WEDNESDAY EVENING

LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS & WORSHIP

Soup Supper 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Worship 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

on

Ash Wednesday, February 18th

Wednesdays February 25th, March 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th

The Soup Supper sign up board is in the Narthex.
Please let us know if you are bringing a pot of soup to share.

Celebration Sunday at Messiah

PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 29



We'll celebrate with a combined worship service at 10 a.m. in the Family Life Center and our annual Youth Parade.



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!



40 Houbolt Road, Joliet
 815-741-4488
 www.MLCJoliet.org

NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED

ADULT "INSIGHT" BIBLE STUDY

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



COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP TIME

Be sure to join us for coffee & good company on Sunday mornings in Fellowship Hall! Coffee will be available beginning at 9:40 a.m. and will continue until after the later service gets out. If you are an 8:30 attender - stay late! If Family Praise & Worship is your service - come early! Make new friends!

CONNECT WITH MESSIAH

You can use this QR code to let us know you're new, tell us that you're interested in next steps at MLC, submit prayer requests, fill out a Connect Card, and give online.

Scan here to connect with MLC:



Online Giving - There are two convenient ways to do it:

- 1) On our website at <https://www.mlcjoliet.org/give>.
- 2) Through the Church Center app on your phone or tablet, or scan the QR code above.

DAYBREAK SHELTER - WILL YOU HELP SAVE OUR PARTNERSHIP?

For 35 years Messiah has prepared & served dinner once a month to those less fortunate at Daybreak Homeless Shelter in Joliet, from 5:30-7:00 p.m. on the second Monday of each month. Our long-time coordinator has stepped down and we are looking for a volunteer (or two) willing to take the baton. This would entail coordinating volunteers & food donations, light shopping, and communicating with Daybreak staff as needed. **Please reach out to the front office for more information.**

FAITH & BODY

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.

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Please join Messiah's new Grief Support Group on the **first Thursday 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. Questions may be directed to Pat Burke or Judy Fowler.



MEMORY BEARS



Messiah's Memory Bears Group normally meets the 4th Tuesday of every month from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. next meeting is **March 24th**. We have jobs that do not require sewing! Text Cindi Souza at (815) 931-8478 or email regency118@comcast.net for more info.

OWLS (Older, Wiser, Loving Seniors)

OWLS meets on the second Tuesday of every month at noon, September-May. We enjoy a light lunch together, play trivia, and usually feature a guest speaker or entertainment! Our next luncheon is on **April 14th**. We ask that everyone **sign up in the Narthex** so we have a headcount and to let us know what finger food, appetizer, salad or dessert you will bring to share.



PRAYER CHAIN

Messiah uses an email-based 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 kept confidential 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 in the Fireside Room from 10:15-11:15 to pray together over our prayer request list. For more info text Cindi Souza at (815) 931-8478 or by email regency118@comcast.net, or reach out to Beth Hohisel at bhohisel@hotmail.com.

PUBLICATION DEADLINES

Items for the bulletin are due by the end of the day each Tuesday, and newsletter material is due the 20th of each month.

QUILTERS

Messiah Quilters meet the 3rd Tuesday each month from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. 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.

We are in need of clean sheets of any size, flat or fitted (no stains or holes) to be used as the backs of our quilts. You can drop them off in the basket provided in the Narthex. Thank you, in advance!

Contact Kathy Mueller at (815) 953-6601 or scpbklane@aol.com for more information or any questions you may have. Hope to see you on **March 17th**!

STAY-N-PLAY

Our FREE weekly open gym play group for kids five and under (along with their caretaker) meets in the Family Life Center every Tuesday morning (Sept-May) from 9:30-11. Bring the littles for play time! Adults enjoy coffee on us!

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

Women's Bible Study is planning to begin a new series after Easter. Details coming soon. For more information please reach out to Sherri Unyi or Laurel Ling.

YOUNG ADULT "IGNITE" BIBLE STUDY

For those out of high school and older - Join us for coffee and Bible Study in classroom #101 Sunday mornings during Education Hour.

MESSIAH KIDS (pre-K to 5th grades)

CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Our Children's Choir will perform during the 10:45 service on March 22 and April 26. For more info please reach out to Season Lawler.



EASTER EGG HUNT & CANDY DONATIONS

Our annual Easter Egg Hunt is March 28th from 1-3 p.m. We'll start at 1 with a Story Walk in the FLC, and the hunt will begin at 2 outdoors (weather permitting). We are asking for your **donations of unopened candy**. There is a collection basket in the Narthex. Thank you!

J-CHURCH

J-Church is the third Sunday of every month (except December) at 10:45 in the FLC.

MESSIAH KIDS WEDNESDAYS (MKW)

MKW meets Wednesday evenings from 6-8 p.m. in the upper level Kidz Club!

MILE MARKERS

- First Communion (4th grade) March 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th,
Communion April 2nd.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Pre-K through 5th groups meet upstairs in the Kidz Club, 6th-8th in the Youth Room!

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 to 12th grades)

BIBLE STUDY (SUNDAY MORNINGS)

Bible Study for high schoolers is in the Fireside Room.

FRIENDS AND MENTORS (FAM) FOR HIGH SCHOOLERS

FAM meets on Wednesday evenings from 6-8.

HEAD 2 HEART (H2H)

Our H2H (Confirmation) program for 6th-8th graders runs on Wednesdays evenings from 6-8.

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



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

Answers VBS
EMERALD CROSSING
An Irish Adventure Through Psalm 23

MESSIAH
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

The advertisement features a green background with a white border. It includes a QR code for registration and a circular logo with a sunburst effect that says 'VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!'. The text is in various shades of green and black, with some words in bold. There are small green leaf icons in the corners.

Calling for VBS volunteers! Please be sure to register using the above QR code. There will be a **Volunteer Workshop** on **Sunday, June 7th** at 9:40 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Questions? Email VBS@mlcjoliet.org.

ALTAR FLOWERS

If you would like to sponsor Altar flowers, please sign up in the Narthex or call the office at 815-741-4488. Arrangements are \$25 each.

THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

SUNDAY, March 15

8 a.m. Coffee Shop Fundraiser
8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
9:40 a.m. Education Hour
10:45 a.m. Family Praise & Worship,
J-Church
1 p.m. Cristo Rey Worship

MONDAY, March 16

n/a

TUESDAY, March 17

6:30 p.m. PPC Meeting

WEDNESDAY, March 18

5:30 p.m. Lenten Soup Supper
6 p.m. FAM, H2H, MKW
7 p.m. Worship

THURSDAY, March 19

9 a.m. Faith & Body Challenge
10:15 a.m. Prayer Team
12 p.m. Staff Meeting
7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

FRIDAY, March 20

n/a

SATURDAY, March 21

9 a.m. Worship Team Rehearsal

SUNDAY, March 22

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
9:40 a.m. Education Hour
10:45 a.m. Family Praise & Worship
1 p.m. Cristo Rey Worship

ATTENDANCE

LAST WEEK:

8:30: 84
10:45: 72
K-5th: 10
6th-8th: 5
High School: 3
Ignite: 1
Insight: 23
Online: 24

2026 GIVING

Operating Budget: \$694,359
YTD Operating Budget: \$133,531
YTD Giving Received: \$102,608
Needed Each Week: \$13,353
Received Last Week: \$10,425

STEWARDSHIP VERSE OF THE WEEK

James 1:2-4

Count it all joy, my brothers,
when you meet trials of various
kinds, for you know that
the testing of your faith
produces steadfastness.
And let steadfastness have its full
effect, that you may be perfect and
complete, lacking in nothing.

Messiah office hours are Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.,
otherwise by appointment. Please call (815) 741-4488.

