

# MESSIAH MESSENGER



## Advent Message



From the Pastor

## LEAP

The word "leap" occurs 21 times in the ESV translation of the Bible. It is an Advent theme. John the Baptist as a fetus leaps in the womb of Elizabeth when he hears the voice of Mary the mother of God. All the wonder and hope needed in the truest test of faith for this young woman.

The first occurrences of "leap" is the description of David's uncontrollable leaping and dancing for joy on the return of the Arc to Jerusalem. A fascinating story in 2 Samuel 6. There are two references to Israel's troops aided by God to leap over walls. In the Kingdom of God lame men leap (Acts 3:8) as prophesied in Isaiah 35. Terrified hearts leap out of place (Job 37:1). God promises that when He gives us words that create faith and trust we will leap like calves from the stall (Malachi 4:2).

When is the last time you, your heart or your family leapt? When is the last time you were captured with the joy and freedom of being able to leap? Like a young child who can not help but run and leap simply for the fun of it. Just watch the kids holding a parent's hand in the shopping mall this season.

A leap is a gift from God produced by faith. It is a wild and playful disruption to our regular programming. It is daring to do something new not knowing where you might land. Leaping is what the church and its families do. God sets us free like a calf from the stall to leap into situations and ministries, charities and activities, relationships and conversations, invitations and forgiveness.

In the new year as we hear what God did in the early church, we will be asking the same thing of our church and its families. What is the next leap that God will inspire in our church and its families as we BRING others into right relationships with God? How is God BUILDing you and your children into those who leap? What are the messy and unpredictable places you will land as your leaps of faith BUMP into a lost and distracted world? You are God's promise for those already in your life as well as for the stranger. You have the faith to leap!

In service to the King,

Pr. 

[pastor.hoover@mlcjoliet.org](mailto:pastor.hoover@mlcjoliet.org)

## SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

MESSIAH  
CHURCH

8:30 A.M. TRADITIONAL WORSHIP

9:30 A.M. EDUCATION HOUR (OPTIONS FOR ALL AGES!)

10:30 A.M. FAMILY PRAISE & WORSHIP



# STEWARDSHIP

Preparing Our Hearts

Advent is a season of waiting, hope, and preparation for the coming of Christ. Stewardship during this time invites us to prepare not just our hearts, but also our lives, by giving generously of our time, talents, and treasures. As we anticipate the gift of God's love in Christ, let us reflect that love through acts of service and generosity, trusting that God will multiply our offerings for His kingdom.

We are looking for a person to provide child care in our nursery on Wednesday evenings. Many of our youth are involved in Messiah activities on Wednesday, so are not available. If you are interested in a paid position in the nursery, or know of someone who is, please contact Tom Bond at [tlbond7@hotmail.com](mailto:tlbond7@hotmail.com) or text 815-922-6196. Hours would be 5:45-8:00. The minimum age is 16, or 14 with a work permit.

With God's grace,

- *Gerry Boe*, Stewardship Director, [stewardship@mlcjoliet.org](mailto:stewardship@mlcjoliet.org)

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## Christmas Gifts to Messiah

This year, Christmas gifts to Messiah will be used in celebration of our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an emphasis on what great things God has done in our church. Part of these funds will be used towards the new bell structure, which we hope to celebrate in 2026 as well as special events throughout the year!



Please direct questions or comments to Congregation President, Brian Wielbik, [president@mlcjoliet.org](mailto:president@mlcjoliet.org).

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### **YEAR END GIVING**

Year end giving for 2025 must be received in the front office by Wednesday, **December 31<sup>st</sup>**. Online contributions by midnight, all others by noon.





# Messiah Kids 2025 Christmas Program



December 21<sup>st</sup> at 9:45  
in the Sanctuary,  
during Education Hour

We invite you to come watch our Christmas  
Pageant this holiday season, with songs we all  
know and a beautiful story told by our students!



**Participating students, please attend the dress rehearsal  
from 12-2 p.m. on Saturday, December 20<sup>th</sup> in the Sanctuary.**





**Family Praise Night**, also the first Wednesday of every month, is from 6-6:30 p.m. (right after dinner) in the cafe area of the FLC.

Join our children and student ministries for a time of praise, kids' showcase, and a short message!



*Enjoy your favorite songs  
 of the Christmas season  
 with a piano concert featuring  
 our very own Rose Ann Sochan  
 along with other special guests!*

*Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>  
 at 3 p.m. in the Sanctuary.*





WEDNESDAY EVENINGS DURING

## ADVENT



*Please join us  
for worship:  
December 3  
December 10  
December 17*

*Wednesdays at 7 p.m.*

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CHURCH



MESSIAH  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

## Choir Christmas Cantata

Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>

during the 8:30 service

## Christmas Eve Services

5:00, 7:00 & 11:00 p.m.

MESSIAH  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

*We invite you to join us!*



**Gifts for Baby Jesus is a tradition here for children on Christmas Eve!** We invite children to bring gifts for baby Jesus to our 5:00 or 7:00 p.m. services. These gifts are items needed by newborn children and new mothers: diapers, clothing, blankets, etc. Please identify on the wrapped package what each item is, the sizes and who it is for. These gifts will reach the community through our Lil Loves ministry and Living Alternatives. Thank you for your willingness to give!

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CHURCH

# Baptism Sunday

Annual Baptism Sunday  
is January 18.

*A hopeful beginning to a beautiful faith journey.*



This will be an opportunity to be baptized, or to reaffirm the promise made to you in your own baptism... An opportunity to invite family & friends to place that promise upon their children. Please see Pastor Kurt if you or a family member would like to be baptized.



**Messiah's Daily Devotional Podcast**

## Word Play!

*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 both [Audacy](#) & [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."*



# FOR THE LADIES OF MESSIAH

## **BIBLE STUDY**

Our Women's Bible Study is taking a brief winter break and resume with a new series in January! Watch for more info!

## **CHRISTMAS TEA**

Ladies - Mark your calendar for our Christmas Tea!



## **JOLET AREA CHRISTIAN WOMEN**

You and your friends are invited to Joliet Christian Women's upcoming luncheon in Messiah's Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, **December 17<sup>th</sup>**, 11:15 a.m.-1:30 p.m., \$20.00 includes a catered lunch. They'll hold their annual Christmas cookie bake sale!

**RSVP by Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>** by contacting Barb at 815-439-2076 or [mrs.brutus56@gmail.com](mailto:mrs.brutus56@gmail.com), or call Sonya at 815-727-1626. Check out their website at <https://www.stonecroft.org/>







# MESSIAH KIDZ CLUB (K-5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE)

Parents of children (K-5<sup>th</sup> 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 IS BACK!

Children's Choir will perform on **January 25<sup>th</sup>**, **February 22<sup>nd</sup>**, **March 22<sup>nd</sup>**, and **April 26<sup>th</sup>** during the 10:30 service. Please contact Season Lawler for more information.

## J-CHURCH

J-Church is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of every month (except December) at 10:30 in the Family Life Center!



## MESSIAH KIDS WEDNESDAYS (MKW)

MKW is Wednesdays from 6-8 p.m. beginning (through April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026). For more info, contact Beth Hohisel at [bhohisel@hotmail.com](mailto:bhohisel@hotmail.com) or (815) 735-7897.

Register here:



## SUNDAY SCHOOL EDUCATION HOUR

Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade groups meet at 9:30 upstairs in the Kidz Club, 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> in the Youth Room!

Register here:



Would you please consider donating any of the following items to our Kidz Club Sunday School? Items may be left in the food pantry collection bin in the Narthex, **clearly marked for "Sunday School."** Thank you, in advance!

Paper Towels	Facial Tissue	Hand Sanitizer
Clorox Wipes	Dixie Cups	Invisible Tape
Pretzels	Play-Doh	Goldfish Crackers
5" Blunt-tip Scissors		Dry Erase Cleaner

## VBS 2026

MARK YOUR CALENDAR for **Emerald Crossing VBS: June 22-26, 2026**

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



For more info on ministries for kids pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, email Leslie McFarland, Children's Min. Director, at [childrensmin@mlcjoliet.org](mailto:childrensmin@mlcjoliet.org) or Megan Kuhn, Christian Ed. Director, at [christianed@mlcjoliet.org](mailto:christianed@mlcjoliet.org).



## **MESSIAH STUDENT MINISTRIES** ( 6<sup>TH</sup>–12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE )

### **BIBLE STUDY EDUCATION HOUR (SUNDAY MORNINGS)**

- 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade Bible Study meets in the Youth Room at 9:30!
- 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 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders Wednesdays from 6-8 p.m.!

For more info on ministries for students 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade,  
email Kersten Stier, Youth Director, at [stumin@mlcjoliet.org](mailto:stumin@mlcjoliet.org).

## **YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY**

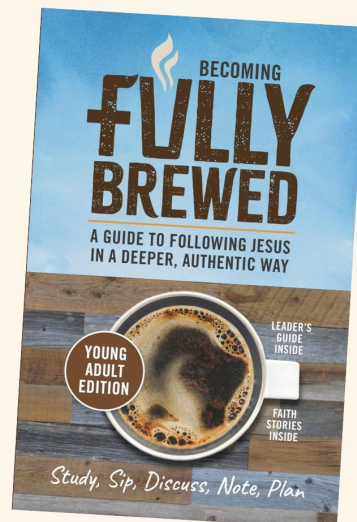
**"IGNITE!"**  
**YOUNG ADULT**  
**BIBLE STUDY**  
**FOR THOSE POST-HIGH SCHOOL**  
**AND OLDER**

**SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 9:30**  
**IN CLASSROOM #101**



COME FOR COFFEE,  
CONNECTION, AND  
CONVERSATION.

**MESSIAH**  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

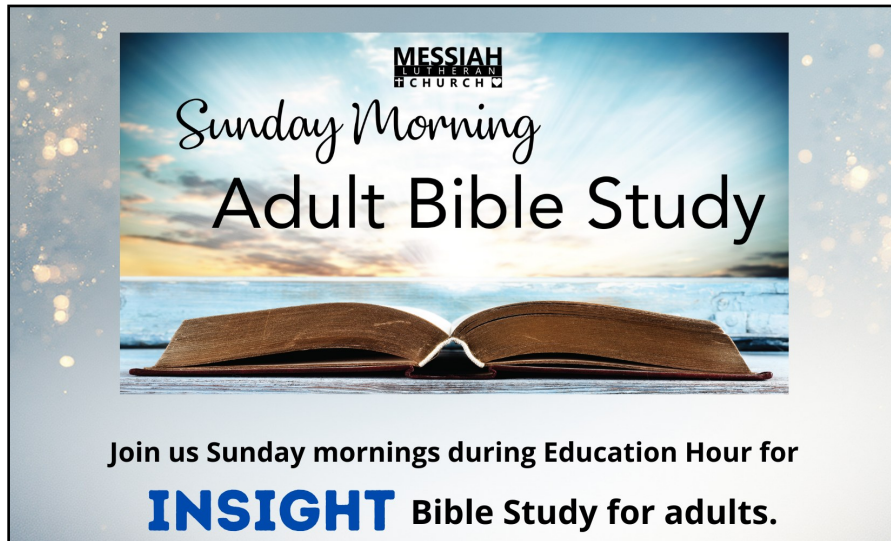




## OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED!

### ADULT "INSIGHT" BIBLE STUDY EDUCATION HOUR

We are currently studying the New Testament.



### 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.

### DAYBREAK SHELTER



## *Daybreak Shelter*



Can you spare 1-1/2 hours once a month to prepare, serve or donate at Daybreak Shelter?

**2nd Monday  
5:30 -7pm**

Volunteers are needed to serve dinner to those less fortunate at Daybreak Homeless Shelter in Joliet.

The commitment is from 5:30-7 p.m. on the second Monday of each month. Food donations are also needed. Sign up in the Narthex. Messiah members will be serving at Daybreak on Monday, **December 8<sup>th</sup>**.

### 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 - Proudly going on our 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary!**

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, usually on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month. **We will NOT MEET in December.** 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](mailto:regency118@comcast.net) for more info.



## **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.**

## **MLC OFFICE HOURS**

The office is staffed Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturdays and evenings are by appointment.



## **OWLS**

OWLS meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at noon, September through May. In December, we'll welcome a special guest vocalist. Be sure to sign up in the Narthex.

A festive poster for the OWLS Christmas Celebration. It features a pine branch with red berries and a red ornament on the left. The text is centered and reads: "Older, Wiser, Loving Seniors" in green, "OWLS" in large red letters, "Tuesday, December 9<sup>th</sup>" in green, and "at noon" in green. To the right of the text are three cartoon owls (brown, yellow, and blue) perched on a branch, with the "MESSIAH CHURCH" logo below them. The background is a light blue with a subtle snowflake pattern.

Older, Wiser, Loving Seniors

# OWLS

Tuesday, December 9<sup>th</sup>  
at noon

**Joyful Hearts Christmas Celebration!**

Sign up in the Narthex to let us know a headcount and what appetizer/finger-food, salad or dessert you will bring!

Our December luncheon will feature a special guest vocalist!



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](mailto: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](mailto:regency118@comcast.net), or Beth Hohisel at [bhohisel@hotmail.com](mailto:bhohisel@hotmail.com).

## **PUBLICATION DEADLINES**

Just a friendly reminder that **Sunday bulletin** material must be received in the front office by the end of the day each Tuesday. Material for the **newsletter** is due the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.



## **QUILTERS**

The next Messiah Quilting Day will be on **December 16<sup>th</sup>** 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.

We are **in need of clean sheets**, 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.

Contact Kathy Mueller at (815) 953-6601 or [scpbklane@aol.com](mailto:scpbklane@aol.com) for more information or any questions you may have. Hope to see you on **December 16<sup>th</sup>**!



## SANCTUARY CHOIR

rehearses on Thursdays from 7:15-8:45 p.m.  
and performs weekly during the 8:30 service.  
If you'd like to join in, reach out to Herb Alexander  
at [halex12240@gmail.com](mailto:halex12240@gmail.com) or call the church office.

## 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 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.



**Please note that there will be no Stay-N-Play the week of Christmas.**

## YEAR END GIVING

Year end giving for 2025 must be received in the front office by Wednesday, **December 31<sup>st</sup>**. Online contributions by midnight, all others by noon.

**PRAYER**  
*Space*

MATTHEW 6:9-13

**FELLOWSHIP HALL**  
behind the divider  
**SUNDAYS**  
8:30-11:30 a.m.

Prayer is simply talking with God.  
We can pray anytime, anywhere about anything that's on our mind.

Prayer Space offers a variety of tools and prompts to start your conversation with God today.

Stop in for a few minutes or an hour or more, alone or with a prayer partner or two.

Thanks to 24-7 Prayer USA for inspiration and resources.

MESSIAH  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH



# 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](http://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!



## ONLINE *giving*




**Two convenient ways to give online:**

- 1) On our website at [www.mlcjoliet.org/give](http://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!

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS!



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 - Gerald Witte</li> <li>3- Nikki Burke</li> <li>4 - Ruth Ann Ungeran</li> <li>7 - Mark Burnetti</li> <li>8 - Herb Alexander</li> <li>9 - Erma Turner</li> <li>10 - Lynn Bond</li> <li style="padding-left: 20px;">William Calderon</li> <li style="padding-left: 20px;">Lauren Enix</li> <li>14 - Brian Wielbik</li> <li>15 - Monica Beavis</li> <li>16 - Olivia Bowman</li> <li>23 - Paul Capps</li> <li>26 - Diane Zuehl</li> <li>27 - Coby Dykstra</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>28 - Mel Mitchka</li> <li>29 - Deb Dole</li> <li>30 - Bev May</li> <li>31 - Don Cyborski</li> <li style="padding-left: 20px;">Tessa Michalski</li> </ul> |
|---|---|



## DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES!

13 - Terry & Pat Anderson  
17 - Ken & Norina Schroth

## DECEMBER SERVERS

### **Counters**

12/07/25 Ken Skinner, Dan Stukel  
12/14/25 Gayle Arko, Wayne Lauffer  
12/21/25 Stan Buhr, Joy McClintock  
12/26/25\* Gayle Arko, Joy McClintock  
12/28/25 Judy Fowler, Zach Hoelscher

\* For Christmas Eve offering

### **Ushers 8:30**

12/07/25 Jerry Buchenau, Dan Stukel  
12/14/25 Bill Unyi, Alan Costello  
12/21/25 Wayne Lauffer, Bob Miller  
12/28/25 Craig Stone, Paul Allen

### **Ushers 10:30**

12/07/25 Gary Phillips, Jeff Holmes  
12/14/25 Tom & Tammie Eigenbauer  
12/21/25 Jeff Holmes, Josh Johnke  
12/28/25 Darryl Hoelscher, Gary Phillips

### **Communion Assistants 8:30**

12/07/25 Joy McClintock, Cindi Souza  
Paul Allen  
12/14/25 Nancy Bertnik, Tom Bond,  
Jane Costello  
12/21/25 Tom Bond, Joy McClintock,  
Marvina Allen  
12/28/25 Bev Korby, Joy McClintock,  
Nancy Bertnik

### **Communion Assistants 10:30**

12/07/25 Terry Anzalone, Darryl Hoelscher,  
one needed  
12/21/25 Terry Anzalone, two needed

### **Readers 8:30**

12/07/25 Jane Costello  
12/14/25 Crystal Harrison  
12/21/25 Angie Mitchka  
12/28/25 Paul Allen

### **Readers 10:30**

12/07/25 Amy Melton  
12/14/25 Molly Hoover  
12/21/25 Amy Melton  
12/28/25 needed

### **Greeters 8:30**

12/07/25 Darryl & Cindi Souza  
12/14/25 Wayne Lauffer, Nancy Bertnik  
12/21/25 Pat Boe, one needed  
12/28/25 Marty Hohisel, one needed

### **Greeters 10:30**

12/07/25 Lynn Tapella, one needed  
12/14/25 two needed  
12/21/25 Lynn Tapella, one needed  
12/28/25 Donna Stier, Judy Fowler





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

Pastor Kurt's new Sunday sermon series begins November 30<sup>th</sup>!

The graphic features a dark blue background with a subtle starry pattern. In the center, the title "Mary's Song" is written in a large, elegant, white cursive script. Below the title, the words "Advent Sermon Series" are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. To the left of the title is a small, square, golden-framed image of a purple and gold robe. To the right is a similar square, golden-framed image of a white and gold robe. Above the title is a larger, rectangular, golden-framed image of a nativity scene with figures in a stable. At the bottom center, the "MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH" logo is displayed in white.

Senior Pastor Kurt Hoover  
Associate Pastor: vacant  
Bookkeeper Sherri 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

[info@mlcjoliet.org](mailto:info@mlcjoliet.org)

815-741-4488