

MESSIAH
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

First Sunday after Christmas
December 28, 2025
8:30 a.m.



*Hymn
Sing*

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

December 28, 2025
8:30 a.m. Hymn Sing

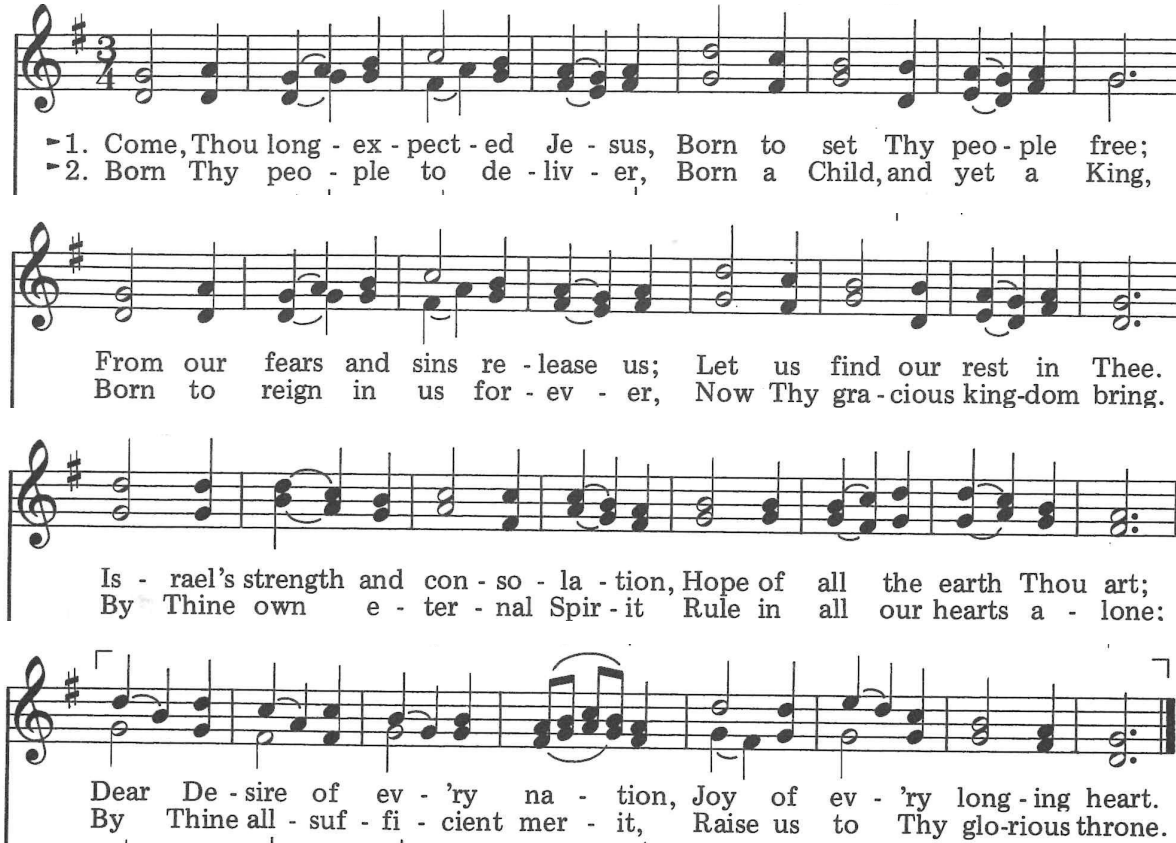
Enter Reverently, Worship Joyfully, Live Faithfully

PRELUDE

Rose Ann Sochan

OPENING HYMN

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus," #124 v. 1-2



1. Come, Thou long - ex - spect - ed Je - sus, Born to set Thy peo - ple free;
2. Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, Born a Child, and yet a King,

From our fears and sins re - lease us; Let us find our rest in Thee.
Born to reign in us for - ev - er, Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring.

Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art;
By Thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone:

Dear De - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
By Thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it, Raise us to Thy glo - rious throne.

HOLY SPIRIT LITANY ADAPTED FROM PSALM 51

Leader: Create in me a clean heart, O God,
All: and renew a right spirit within me.
Leader: Cast me not away from your presence,
All: and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Leader: Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
All: and uphold me with a willing spirit.
Leader: We worship You Lord in the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
All: Amen.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

CHRISTMAS HYMN SING

Your favorite hymns, by request.



CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Leslie McFarland

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Rose Ann Sochan

OUR 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 1:1-5 (ESV)

Reader: Paul Allen

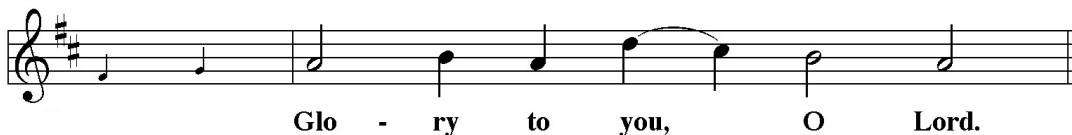
¹ In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, ² until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³ He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

⁴ And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

SECOND LESSON, Luke 1:1-4 (ESV)

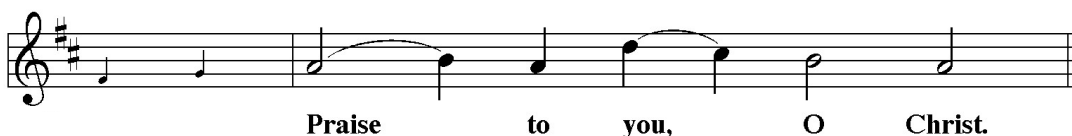
¹ Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, ² just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, ³ it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

GOSPEL LESSON, Mark 1:1-8 (ESV)



¹ The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, ³ the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"

⁴ John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."



MESSAGE

"Living in the Spirit"

Pastor Kurt Hoover

(Copies of this sermon and others can be found in the Narthex.)

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: Nancy Bertnik, 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"



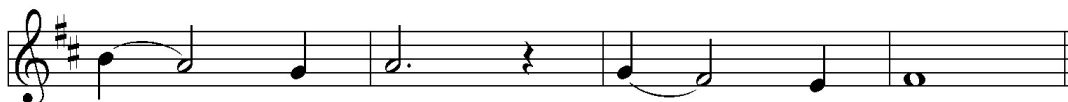
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



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

"O Come, All Ye Faithful," #145 v. 1-3



- 1. O come, all ye faith-ful, joy-ful and tri-um-phant, O come ye, O
- 2. Sing choirs of an-gels, sing in ex-ul-ta-tion, O sing, all ye
- 3. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this hap-py morn-ing, Je-sus, to



come ye to Beth-le-hem! Come and be-hold Him, born the King of
bright hosts of heav'n a-bove! Glo-ry to God, all glo-ry in the
Thee be all glo-ry giv'n; Word of the Fa-ther, now in flesh ap-

Refrain



an-gels!
high-est! O come, let us a-dore Him, O come, let us a-dore Him,
pear-ing!



O come, let us a-dore Him, Christ the Lord! Lord!

(slight rit. last time)

Optional transition
to "For Unto Us"

COMMUNION HYMN

"O Holy Night!" #148 v. 1-3



Introduction (use arpeggiated chords
in a triplet feeling throughout)

- 1. O ho-ly night! the stars are bright-ly
- 2. Led by the light of faith se-re-ne-ly
- 3. Tru-ly He taught us to love one an-



shin-ing, It is the night of the dear Sav-ior's birth; Long lay the
beam-ing, With glow-ing hearts by His cra-dle we stand; So led by
oth-er; His law is love and His gos-pel is peace; Chains shall He



world in sin and er-ror pin-ing, Till He ap-peared and the soul felt its
light of a star sweet-ly gleam-ing, Here came the wise men from O-ri-ent
break, for the slave is our broth-er, And in His name all op-pres-sion shall



worth. A thrill of hope the wea-ry world re-joic - es, For yon-der breaks a
land. The King of kings lay thus in low - ly man - ger, In all our tri - als
cease. Sweet hymns of joy in grate-ful chor-us raise we, Let all with-in us



new and glo-rious morn; Fall on your knees, Oh, hear the an - gel
born to be our Friend; He knows our need, To our weak - ness is no
praise His ho - ly name; Christ is the Lord, Oh, praise His name for-



voic - es! O night di - vine, O night when Christ was born!
strang-er. Be - hold your King, be - fore Him low - ly bend!
ev - er! His pow'r and glo - ry ev - er - more pro - claim!



O night, O ho - ly night, O night di - vine!
Be - hold your King, be - fore Him low - ly bend!
His pow'r and glo - ry ev - er - more pro - claim.

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.

THE BENEDICTION



CLOSING HYMN

"Good Christian Men, Rejoice," #151 v. 1-3



1. Good Chris - tian men, re - joice With heart and soul and voice;
2. Good Chris - tian men, re - joice With heart and soul and voice;
3. Good Chris - tian men, re - joice With heart and soul and voice:



Give ye heed to what we say: News! news! Je - sus Christ is born to-day!
Now ye hear of end - less bliss: Joy! joy! Je - sus Christ was born for this!
Now ye need not fear the grave: Peace! peace! Je - sus Christ was born to save!



Ox and ass be - fore Him bow, And He is in the man - ger now:
He has o - pened heav - en's door, And man is bless - ed ev - er - more:
Calls you one and calls you all To gain His ev - er - last - ing hall:



Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

POSTLUDE

Rose Ann Sochan

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

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2008 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #35178., CCLI License No. 854341

NEW SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

begins next week, **JANUARY 4th!**

8:30 Traditional Worship

9:40 Education Hour

10:45 Family Praise & Worship

Just a reminder that 2025 year-end gifts need to be received in the church office by noon on December 31st.

Our new sermon series kicks off this morning!

LEAP: God's church then and now. What are the leaps God is asking of us as Messiah Lutheran Church? God is supporting the community. God is creating and training new pastors. God is inviting those you know to celebrate 125 years of church family.

NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED

ADULT "INSIGHT" BIBLE STUDY

Join us in Fellowship Hall, Sunday mornings at 9:30! Our current series focuses on reading through the New Testament. We'll go from Matthew to Revelation in three months!

BAPTISM SUNDAY

Mark your calendar - Baptism Sunday is **January 18**. 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 and friends to place that promise upon their children, as well. Please see Pastor Kurt if you or a family member would like to be baptized.

CARING FOR PASTORS INSTALLATION

On **January 11th** we celebrate the mission God has laid upon the hearts of Pastors John and Martha Nelson. We will be installing them for the official calling to care for LCMC pastors. Pr. John will also be preaching and giving us an update on funds raised and the service provided through Pr. John and Pr. Martha's ministry work.



COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP TIME

Be sure to join us for coffee & good company on Sunday mornings in Fellowship Hall! Coffee will be available beginning at 9:30 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, Karen Rebuehr, has discerned the need to step 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 Karen, or call 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.

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 January 27. We have jobs that do not require sewing! Text Cindi Souza at (815) 931-8478 or email regency118@comcast.net for more info.

NEW TO MESSIAH? WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Have you been attending and want more info on becoming a member? Please join us at the "**Get to Know Messiah**" membership class on Sundays, **February 8th and 15th** at 9:40 a.m. You will learn our story and about our people and the vision of Messiah. This is also an opportunity for us to get to know YOU and the best way to support your faith journey. Child care is available upon request. Reach out to Pastor Kurt or call the church office 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 **January 13th**.

Chili and beverages will be provided in January. 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. Questions may be directed to Pat Burke, Pat Buchenau, or Lisa Winters.



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 **January 20th**!

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!

WEDNESDAY EVENING FAMILY DINNER & FAMILY PRAISE NIGHT

Wednesday Family Dinner will take place the first Wednesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. Your RSVP is important to us - a sign up list is posted in the Narthex. We can also use help with setup and cleanup, if you are able to assist, please sign up in the Narthex.

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!



WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

Women's Bible Study will begin a new 6-week session on **January 7th** from 1-2:30 in the Fireside Room! 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 at 9:30.

MESSIAH KIDS (pre-K to 5th grades)

CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Our Children's Choir will perform during the 10:30 service on January 25, February 22, March 22, and April 26. For more info please reach out to Season Lawler.

J-CHURCH

J-Church is the third Sunday of every month (except December) at 10:30 in the FLC.

MESSIAH KIDS WEDNESDAYS (MKW)

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

MILE MARKER 2026 DATES

- Let's Pray (Kindergarten) January 18th workshop; presentation January 25th.
- My New Bible (2nd grade) February 1st & 8th; presentation February 15th.
- 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!

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.



If you purchased a Christmas poinsettia,
please be sure to take it home!



ALTAR FLOWERS

Altar flowers are provided by Lynn Tapella in loving memory of Marie Smeets on her birthday, and by Greg & Deb Dole in celebration of God's peace.

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 (December 28)

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
and Hymn Sing (streamed)
9:30 a.m. Education Hour
10:30 a.m. Family Praise & Worship
1 p.m. Cristo Rey Worship

MONDAY (December 29)

TUESDAY (December 30)

WEDNESDAY (December 31)

THURSDAY (January 1)

Happy New Year!

Office closed

FRIDAY (January 2)

Office closed

SATURDAY (January 3)

9 a.m. Worship Team Rehearsal

SUNDAY (January 4)

→ New schedule begins!

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 a.m.: 108
10:30 a.m.: 78
Insight: n/a
Ignite: n/a
HS: n/a
K-5th: n/a
6th-8th: n/a
Online: 26

2025 GIVING

Operating Budget: \$680,068
YTD Operating Budget: \$666,990
YTD Giving Received: \$597,318
Average Weekly Need: \$13,078
Received Last Week: \$15,534

STEWARDSHIP VERSE OF THE WEEK

Matthew 13:16

But blessed are your eyes
because they see and your ears
because they hear.

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



Sanctuary Choir Director Herb Alexander
Worship Coordinator Justin Brown
Office Coordinator Vicki Dallmann
Children's Choir Director Season Lawler
Children's Ministry Director Leslie McFarland
Building Liaison Kate Richmond
Youth Director Kersten Stier
Technology Coordinator Nikolai Stier
Bookkeeper Sherri Unyi