

Messiah Messenger

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

In Between and Beginning Anew

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PASTOR

THE REV. DR.
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PASTOR EMERITUS

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It's February, and the season following Epiphany – a time between the two great festivals around which the liturgical year is organized: Christmas and Easter. Each has a season of preparation (Advent before Christmas; Lent before Easter) and a post-season (Epiphany after Christmas; Pentecost after Easter).

The lull in liturgical occasions made it a great time for our first potluck since Covid on January 14, which was well-attended and enjoyable, especially with Jon Hlafter's slide presentation of Messiah's first 75 years.

It's also a time of new beginnings:

On February 5, we will receive several people into membership of our congregation. Please join us for the worship service that day, and plan to stay for the fellowship hour afterward to welcome our new members.

The spring semester began this week at Princeton University, as did this semester's Lutheran Campus Ministry Table Talk series. Kicking off the semester with a down-to-earth topic among the university's ivory towers, our discussion topic for February was *Practical Suggestions for Putting Up with People*.

Anchor Wallace, the publishing company that has supplied our bulletin covers for many years, has permanently stopped supplying them. So beginning in March, you'll notice a change in how our Sunday bulletin covers look, and in the translation (ESV instead of NRSV) and the lectionary (LCMS instead of Revised Common) from which the scripture passages are taken. We'll try it for a quarter (March-May) and see how it goes. Once we start using the new bulletin covers, I would welcome your feedback.

Lent also begins this month, with Ash Wednesday on Feb. 22. Please join us for the 7pm service that day with imposition of ashes, and on each Wednesday in March for soup and salad at 6pm, followed by a Lenten Evening Prayer service at 7pm.

Thankful for God's faithfulness to Messiah in the past and looking forward to what He has in store for us in the future,

Pastor Erhardt

The symbol in the upper left corner expresses by means of candle and messianic rose the worship of the Messiah and the Truth of Christ.

The cross signifies His central deed and the five crosses in the rose the sacred wounds.

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR FEBRUARY 2023

Year A	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany February 5, 2023	Isaiah 58:1-12	Psalm 112:1-10	1 Corinthians 2:1-16	Matthew 5:13-20
Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany February 12, 2023	Deuteronomy 30:15-20	Psalm 119:1-8	1 Corinthians 3:1-9	Matthew 5:21-37
Transfiguration Sunday February 19, 2023 (<i>Last Sunday before Lent</i>)	Exodus 24:12-18	Psalm 2	2 Peter 1:16-21	Matthew 17:1-9
Ash Wednesday February 22, 2023	Isaiah 58:1-12	Psalm 51:1-17	2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
First Sunday in Lent February 26, 2023	Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7	Psalm 32	Romans 5:12-19	Matthew 4:1-11



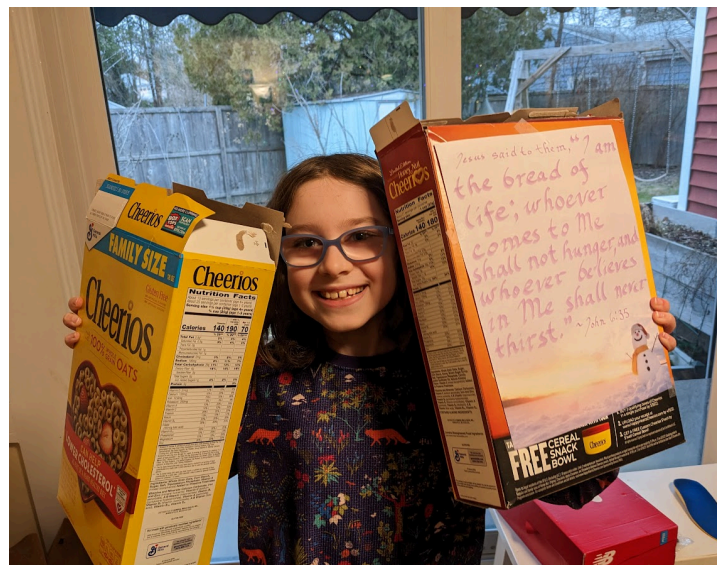
PRAY FAST GIVE

A BREAKFAST EPIPHANY

At the Jameson family's breakfast table recently, the ads on the back of the Honey Nut Cheerios box were the focus of the breakfast conversation. The back of the box was found to be sorely lacking in interest and religious inspiration, so the enterprising family decided to "remodel" it with their own design. They chose a relevant breakfast/food-oriented Gospel verse from the children's Awana bible studies to write out in elegant calligraphy: "Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; whoever comes to Me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in Me shall never thirst.'" (John 6:35-38) The stationery they used was decorated with a smiling snowman and a luminous dawn at the bottom of the page, which, after due consideration, brought to mind some sermons given by Pastor Erhardt in the last few weeks. The Jamesons decided that the ecstatically smiling snowman on the back has had an "epiphany," and that a "dawnzer" is also involved.

For those who may not recognize the references to Pastor Erhardt's sermons, a brief explanation follows. In his sermons for children, Pastor Erhardt has been emphasizing the season of Epiphany, which commemorates the coming of the Magi as the first manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. The word "epiphany" (from the ancient Greek ἐπιφάνεια, *epiphanea*, "manifestation, striking appearance") is often used today to mean "a moment of sudden insight or understanding." As for the word "dawnzer," it comes from the much loved children's book by Beverly Cleary, "Ramona the Pest." Ramona is an energetic, imaginative little girl who manages to get into trouble on a regular basis. Pastor Erhardt has found her to be a source of inspiration in his sermons more than once. In this book, Ramona misunderstands the phrase "dawn's early light" in the Star Spangled Banner, and instead hears it as "dawnzer lee light," which she then imagines to be a type of lamp.

Not many people would find an opportunity for religious expression in a cereal box - we look forward to more of the Jameson family's breakfast musings!



Above: Finding contents of the back of their box of Cheerios insufficiently inspiring, the Jameson family designed their own, with a scripture verse, a snowman experiencing an epiphany, and a "dawnzer."

Left: Ramona Quimby in an illustration from one of Beverly Cleary's books.

EPIPHANY POTLUCK AND SLIDE PRESENTATION

Messiah held its first potluck since the pandemic on Saturday, January 14. The Fellowship Hall was decked with holiday finery. A festively attired nutcracker guarded every table, and poinsettias brightened the sidelines.

In keeping with the season's nippy temperatures, guests were asked to bring heart and stomach-warming comfort food, so the tables were laden with soups, stews, casseroles, all delicious, and all very warm and comforting indeed. The dessert table was decked with pies of different persuasions, cookies, cakes, breads, and refreshing fruit delights. No one left hungry.

After everyone had had at least one serving of dessert, Jon Hlafter presented an engrossing slide show covering Messiah's growth from an idea to the church we know and love today, 75 years since it was founded.



LENTEN SOUP AND SALAD SUPPERS BEGIN MARCH 1 AT 6PM

Lent begins on February 22, Ash Wednesday. A favorite Lenten tradition at Messiah for many years has been the Wednesday evening soup and salad suppers hosted by various members of the congregation, followed by Lenten worship services. After a pandemic-imposed hiatus, the suppers have made a comeback. We have hosts for the first two Wednesdays in March, but we still need volunteers to host suppers on the three remaining Wednesdays: March 15, 22, and 29. If you are able to host supper one of these evenings, please sign up on the sheet on the pew near the front doors. Hosts bring enough soup, salad, and bread to feed between 20 and 30 people. Food costs can be reimbursed (please submit your receipts), and paper goods, butter, and beverages are provided.

If you want to help out but feel you lack the requisite culinary skills, we also need volunteers to help set up and set tables before each supper, and to clean up afterwards (clearing tables and washing dishes). Please write your name and on which dates you can help (please note set up or clean up) on the bottom of the sign-up sheet, or let the office know. Thank you in advance!

Whether as a host or a guest, we hope you will join us for this time of fellowship.





Many hands make light work. While it is more fun to put up Christmas decorations than it is to take them down and put them away, Messiah is blessed to have many volunteers to help with both tasks.

Psalm 98:1, 4-8

1 O sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things. His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him victory.

4 Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

5 Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody.

6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord.

7 Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it.

8 Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy



We are fortunate at Messiah in having several talented musicians lending their talents to the musical offerings during worship. Paul C. Hofreiter, Messiah's new choir director, accompanies the organ with recorder and guitar from time to time, and his daughter has played the recorder for us as well. When she is able to visit, Lorna Jane Bremer, a talented flutist, generously adds her vibrant alto to the choir, as well as enhancing worship with her flute accompaniment.

Psalm 98 (along with many other texts in Scripture) tells us to "sing to the Lord . . . break forth into joyous song and sing praises." Why not heed the psalmist and add your voice to Messiah's choir? It is an extremely fulfilling and meaningful activity, and you don't have to be an opera singer to participate! If you are interested, please speak to Paul or Janice after services.

Above, left to right: Paul C. Hofreiter (guitar), Janice Hofreiter (organ), Lorna Jane Bremer (flute).

FEBRUARY 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 7:30 pm Choir	2 6:30 pm Table Talk	3	4
5 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Holy Communion 3pm Vespers & lecture @ St Peter, Hopewell Twp	6	7	8 7:30 pm Choir	9 7:30 pm Community Book Group	10	11
12 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Holy Communion	13	14	15 7:30 pm Choir	16	17	18
19 No Adult Forum 10:30 am Holy Communion	20	21	22 Ash Wednesday 7pm Service and Imposition of Ashes	23	24	25 9 am Men's Forum
26 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Holy Communion	27	28	LENTEN SOUP & SALAD SUPPERS BEGIN WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1 AT 6:00PM, FOLLOWED BY EVENING PRAYER AT 7 PM.			