



Messiah Messenger

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

THE REV. DR.

MARTIN K. ERHARDT
PASTOR

THE REV. DR.

JOHN MARK GOERSS
PASTOR EMERITUS

JANICE HOFREITER
ORGANIST

PAUL C. HOFREITER
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Immanuel, God with Us

November to January is a festive and action-packed time of year: All Saints, Thanksgiving, Christ the King, Advent, Christmas, New Year, and Epiphany, not to mention St. Martin's Day, my birthday, and the Cricket World Cup. :) So much to do! So much to celebrate! So many opportunities for hospitality! So much for which to thank God!

Holidays can be a lonely time when we're missing friends and family, and a difficult one when we're struggling with pain, addiction, guilt, and regret. Christmas reminds us that God has joined our human race as Jesus Christ not only for times of joy and celebration, but also in our sorrows. He remains with us through thick and thin, through toil, trial, and temptation. In our hardest, loneliest, most conflicted moments, he provides forgiveness, comfort, and joy. Jesus is the light of the world, and the darkness has not overcome it. He is our hope, peace, joy, and love in a confused and confusing world.

So in this holiday season, let us give thanks to God for his goodness and His gifts. As stewards of those gifts, let us seek opportunities to share them with others, to rejoice in the presence of one another, to provide company to the lonely, hope to the desperate, peace in time of turmoil, joy amid sorrow, and love to our fellow sinners – sinners loved, treasured, and redeemed by God. May we never be too proud to admit our need and receive these gifts ourselves, grateful for our lives despite our sin, for our world despite its fall, and for Immanuel, God with us, who, despite the fact that he could have remained comfortably in heaven, has come to us as one of us, to join us in our joys and sorrows, that we might join Him in life everlasting.

Thanks be to God who is with us, loves us, and in whom we are never alone.

Pastor Martin

PLEASE NOTE:

1. Monday is Pastor's day off, so he generally doesn't respond to messages on Mondays. If you have an emergency situation on any day of the week, contact him by calling his cell number and sending him an email.
2. Once in a while, the livestream video on Messiah's website homepage is not the one for the service being streamed. If during a worship service Messiah's livestream is not accessible via the YouTube window on the home page, check for it at <https://www.youtube.com/@thelutheranchurchofthemess7052/streams>

*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 NOVEMBER, DECEMBER, JANUARY 2023

YEAR A	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel
All Saints November 5, 2023	Revelation 7:9-17	Psalm 34:1-10, 22	1 John 3:1-3	Matthew 5:1-12
Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost November 12, 2023	Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25	Psalm 78:1-7	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18	Matthew 25:1-13
Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost November 19, 2023	Judges 4:1-7	Psalm 123	1 Thessalonians 5:1-11	Matthew 25:14-30
Christ the King November 26, 2023	Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24	Psalm 100	Ephesians 1:15-23	Matthew 25:31-46



Advent YEAR B	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
First Sunday of Advent December 3, 2023	Isaiah 64:1-9	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19	1 Corinthians 1:3-9	Mark 13:24-37
Second Sunday of Advent December 10, 2023	Isaiah 40:1-11	Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13	2 Peter 3:8-15a	Mark 1:1-8
Third Sunday of Advent December 17, 2023	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	Psalm 126	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	John 1:6-8, 19-28
Fourth Sunday of Advent December 24, 2023 (morning)	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16	Luke 1:46b-55	Romans 16:25-27	Luke 1:26-38
Christmas Year B	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
Nativity of the Lord - Proper I December 24, 2023 <i>Christmas Eve Candlelight Service</i>	Isaiah 9:2-7	Psalm 96	Titus 2:11-14	Luke 2:1-20
Nativity of the Lord - Proper III December 25, 2023 <i>Christmas Day</i>	Isaiah 52:7-10	Psalm 98	Hebrews 1:1-12	John 1:1-14
First Sunday of Christmas December 31, 2023	Isaiah 61:10-62:3	Psalm 148	Galatians 4:4-7	Luke 2:22-40

Epiphany Year B	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
Baptism of Our Lord January 7, 2024 <i>First Sunday after the Epiphany</i>	Genesis 1:1-5	Psalm 29	Acts 19:1-7	Mark 1:4-11
Second Sunday after the Epiphany January 14, 2024	1 Samuel 3:1-20	Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18	1 Corinthians 6:12-20	John 1:43-51
Third Sunday after the Epiphany January 21, 2024	Jonah 3:1-5, 10	Psalm 62:5-12	1 Corinthians 7:29-31	Mark 1:14-20
Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany January 28, 2024	Deuteronomy 18:15-20	Psalm 111	1 Corinthians 8:1-13	Mark 1:21-28



THE SUMMER BARBECUE WAS A MOVEABLE FEAST!

Messiah's annual Barbecue was held on Saturday, September 9, at 4pm, organized by the indefatigable and incomparable Debbie Baer. In recent years, the weather has been copacetic, balmy, sunny, and blue-skyed. This year, however, gloomy skies and persistent rain predominated. Unfazed, the event organizers moved the festivities indoors, to the Fellowship Hall. The menu wasn't affected - thank goodness! - there were juicy burgers and hot dogs galore, accompanied by a lavish spread of salads, side dishes, and tempting desserts - with plenty of beverages to wash it all down. Please take note: no one in history has ever left a Messiah Barbecue hungry.

The Scavenger Hunt tradition was carried on this year, a version aimed at encouraging children's creative endeavors. Adult assistance was, as you can see in the photos, permissible. Of course, there were plenty of prizes for everyone.



LOOKING FORWARD TO MESSIAH AT 100 (2047-48)

One simple way to benefit Messiah is to designate the congregation as the beneficiary of a bank account, life insurance policy, or brokerage account. Do this – while you are alive! – with the company with whom you hold the account. It can usually be done at no cost and without a lawyer, and typically avoids the probate process and fees. If you'd like to learn more about how you can leave a financial legacy to Messiah and its ministry, contact your brokerage company or financial advisor, or speak to Pastor Erhardt.



DONATE YOUR APPRECIATED SECURITIES TO MESSIAH AND SKIP THE CAPITAL GAINS TAX

Donating appreciated securities (e.g. stocks and bonds) can be a tax-efficient way to support Messiah. Appreciated securities you've owned for at least a year and donated directly to Messiah generally do not incur federal capital gains tax, so the full value of your asset goes to Messiah and is typically deductible if you itemize, subject to federal and state limits. For more information, contact your financial advisor and Pastor Erhardt.

QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS FROM AN IRA

Federal law allows taxpayers who are at least age 70 ½ and owners of Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) to distribute money from an IRA directly to a charity of the owner's choice. This is called a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) and has the advantage of not counting as federally taxable income, but still counting toward a required minimum distribution. QCDs have been possible for many years, but since the federal tax reform of 2017, with so many more people taking the standard deduction instead of itemizing, QCDs are advantageous for many more of us than they used to be, especially for owners of traditional (rather than Roth) IRAs. It's a way to reduce income without having to deduct it (because you never receive it -- it goes directly from your IRA account to the charity). If you'd like to learn more about QCDs, talk with your IRA custodian (company) or financial advisor about how to proceed. You can find more information about the tax implications at:

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/seniors-can-reduce-their-tax-burden-by-donating-to-charity-through-their-ira>

<https://www.irahelp.com/slottreport/5-qcd-rules-you-must-know>



MESSIAH CELEBRATES REFORMATION DAY

Five hundred and six years ago, the Protestant Reformation brought the church's focus back to God's free gift of salvation in Jesus Christ. On Oct. 31, 1517, Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses — the "Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences" — on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany, igniting the Protestant Reformation.

To mark this occasion, Messiah celebrated the 22nd Sunday after Pentecost (October 29) with what Pastor Erhardt referred to as "a taste of the Reformation theme." After this auspicious start to the day, several of Messiah's members then attended a special Reformation vespers service at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Lawrenceville, organized by Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Peter Lutheran Church, and Messiah. The worship service, which featured many hymns, as well as a beautiful anthem sung by a multi-congregation pickup choir and a solo, was followed by a potluck supper and much mingling and fellowship.



Illustration: Detail of 1617 broadside on the centenary of the Reformation showing Martin Luther writing with a giant pen on the church door.

EXPLORING THE NEW ARCHITECTURE AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY



Whitman College is a 21st century example of Collegiate Gothic.

Jon Hlafter led one of his popular walking tours of notable architecture on the Princeton campus on Sunday, October 1, this time focusing on some of the newer buildings.

The 2½ hour tour incorporated most of the modern buildings constructed at the southern end of the campus in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, from Spelman Hall dormitory (1971) to the Lewis Center for the Arts (2017) near the new Dinky station. Surprisingly, it also included a Collegiate Gothic dormitory complex, Whitman College, which was completed in 2008.

WOMEN'S GROUP FORMING AT MESSIAH - JOIN US!

A new women's group centered on Bible study is being planned for Messiah. At a recent introductory meeting, participants filled out surveys about specific interests and meeting times and frequency. There is still time to fill out a form and have your voice heard - surveys are available on the back pew. If you want more information, or to make a suggestion, please speak to Shelby Khandasammy .



NOVEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 7:30 pm Choir	2	3	4 2:30 pm Open House at the Gishlicks
5 2:00 am Standard Time begins 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament	6	7	8 7:30 pm Choir	9 7:30 pm Community Book Group	10	11 9:00 am Fall Work Day
12 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament	13	14 7:15 pm Executive Board	15 7:30 pm Choir	16 6:30 pm Table Talk	17	18 9:00 am Men's Forum
19 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament	20	21	22	23 Thanksgiving Day	24	25
26 Christ the King 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament	27	28	29 7:30 pm Choir	30		

DECEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 First Sunday of Advent 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament 12:15 Voters' Mtg	4	5	6 7:30 pm Choir	7 7:30 pm Community Book Group	8	9 9:00 am Men's Forum 5:00 pm Advent Potluck and Carols
10 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament	11	12	13 7:30 pm Choir	14 6:30 pm Table Talk	15	16
17 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament 7:00 pm Live Nativity at Bethany	18	19	20 7:30 pm Choir	21	22	23
24 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament Christmas Eve 8:00 pm Candlelight Service of Word and Sacrament	25 Christmas Day 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament	26	27	28	29	30
31 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament						

JANUARY 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 7:30 pm Choir	4 7:30 pm Community Book Group	5	6
7 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament	8	9	10 7:30 pm Choir	11	12	13
14 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament	15	16	17 7:30 pm Choir	18	19	20 9:00 am Men's Forum
21 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament	22	23	24 7:30 pm Choir	25	26	27
28 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Service of Word and Sacrament	29	30	31 7:30 pm Choir			