

The MESSENGER



The monthly newsletter of Messiah Lutheran Church (ELCA)
8154 Atlee Road, Mechanicsville, Virginia 23111 804-746-7134

AUGUST 2020

Highlights from Church Council meetings

Messiah Church Council met by conference calls for a special council meeting on 6/29/20 and the regular monthly council meeting on 7/21/20. The following are highlights of the meetings.

Council's special meeting of 6/29/20 was held by conference call to include:

- Allowing small groups to begin meeting at the church with the following protocols in place for the safety and health of all: groups need to register/schedule meetings with church secretary; assign a safety captain responsible for following protocols; designating a cleaning person/team.

- Council will survey congregation for return readiness.

Church will have required postings, written safety/health protocols, cleaning supplies and forms.

Council's regular monthly meeting of 7/21/20 was held by conference call to include:

- The Treasurer's Report shows we were short \$900 for the month of June in expenses over income. It brings our year-to-date income to budget at -\$16,000. This gap continues to grow larger.

- Under Ministry Teams:
 - Christian Formation asked for ideas for Sunday School in the fall if we aren't together yet.
 - The Property Team reported the lawn tractor needed some major repairs that Roger will tackle after mowing season and there were some air conditioning problems we will see if covered under the warranty from last year's service.
 - Social Ministry reported on MCEF's continuing to serve the community.
 - Worship Team said the congregation readiness survey is ready to send out to members this week.

- Old Business: **Pastor Ryan** said that he and his family will be arriving in Richmond, VA on August 7th and staying with a cousin until they find a house. Council said they were happy they will be here among us. We will purchase a new

Continued on page 2

A look inside....

- Pastor's message P. 3
- Calendar, CelebrationsP. 4
- Prayers. MCEF update P. 5
- CFFY Corner P. 6,7
- Virtual VBS P, 7

The Messenger

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VISIT OUR MLC WEBSITE:
<http://www.messiahmech.com>

Your 2020 Church Council And Associate Members

James Anderson Council President
Donna Shaw Vice-President
Karen Morris Secretary

John Cline **Becky Collie**
Anita Philp
Roger Schroeder **Diana Sondor**

Council Liaisons

Christian Formation **Donna Shaw**
 Evangelism **John Cline**
 Finance **James Anderson**
 Property **Roger Schroeder**
 Social Ministry **Anita Philp**
 Stewardship **Diana Sondor**
 Worship **Karen Morris**

Shawn Warmbrod Treasurer
Bill Weaver Financial Secretary
Sue Gilnett, RN... Parish Nurse

Church Council

Continued from page 1

computer for Pastor's use since the old one needed upgrading that would cost almost as much as a new one.

- New Business: Council reviewed readiness for re-opening – survey ready to go, postings will be printed and posted, supplies are at the church and ready and protocol and forms are ready.
 - Council voted to reopen the church for small groups as of 8/1/20. There will be an e-mail informing members of that along with information and forms they will need to use the church. We will see how that goes and results of survey before setting in-person services date.

- Council approved pursuing a church application for the PPP (payroll protection program) offered by the government. This has been encouraged by ELCA for churches to apply for during this time of forced closures.

- **Karen Morris**
 Church Council Secretary

Church directory update

Davina will be updating the church directory in the near future. Please let her know if you've had changes to your home address, phone number, or email address.

Pastor's message

Still waiting

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

These words of Paul's were written to an anxious bunch. These were some of the first believers in Jesus as Savior and Lord. These were members of one of the first churches, part of the first spread of the gospel. The good news had spread and radiated out from Jerusalem, from Galilee, farther and farther. And they believed the promises of resurrection and eternal life, the stuff that creeds would one day be made of. It was just a matter of waiting for Jesus to return, like he said he would.

But then... But then people started to die. Jesus wasn't back yet. Persecution and infighting were plaguing the young church. Jesus still wasn't back yet. Arguments about beliefs and practices and doctrines, and whether you had to be Jewish before becoming Christian, or if you were OK to just be a Gentile believer, all of this debate and disagreement swirled around, and Paul was trying to put out the fires with baptismal water... And Jesus had not yet returned. What about the promises? What now?

So Paul wrote these words and others like them, to the churches in Thessalonica and Corinth and more. Reassuring them. Death was not the end, even if you died before the second coming of Christ. Don't grieve like others that have no hope; the promises are as sure as always. Don't fight; strive for unity and peace. God will not forget you or forsake you. God will bring with him those who have died. And

God will hold you in the palm of God's hand now.

Here we are, two thousand years later, give or take. Still waiting. But now we have another level of waiting - four months and counting of quarantine. Some churches have started gathering together again. Some haven't. Some folks feel safe. Some don't. Even when they gather, it's not safe to sing, or pass the plate, or pass the peace. How long do we have to wait? This is the question on a lot of minds, and in a lot of hearts.

The dangers of this pandemic have lasted longer than most anticipated. And it's affected all aspects of life, not just our ability to gather together for worship and other church activities. And we might be wondering when God will do something about this. This can't be what God desires, can it? And, on top of all of that, there is no shortage of disagreement and debate and infighting in our country, our world, and not just over how to handle a pandemic. This can't be what God desires, either, right?

What God desires is that people love God and one another. And so we do that by keeping each other safe and by adapting. What God desires is that we hold tightly to God's promises. And so we remember our baptisms. We hold on to hope so that we don't grieve - or worry - as others do. What God desires is that we trust that God will work goodness even out of these frightening, trying, uncertain times, and that God will use us as instruments of God's goodness in our communities and this world.

We are an anxious bunch; but God's words of promise and hope are written to us and for us, on our hearts, still today. Hang on to hope, and love one another.

In Christ,
Pastor Ryan

August 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

- 2 Virtual worship*
- 5 Midweek message (virtual)*
- 9 Virtual worship*
- 12 Midweek message*
- 13 16 Virtual worship*
- 18 Church Council 6:15 PM
- 19 Midweek message*
- 23 Virtual worship*
- 26 Midweek message
- 30 Virtual worship*

* All virtual events can be seen on the MessiahMech digital channel on YouTube

NOTE: All calendar events are subject to change.



- 2 **Katryn Combs**
- 4 **Doris Ewing**
- 4 **Bill Weaver**
- 16 **Kyle Starret**
- 22 **Kevin Hendrickson**
- 30 **Patrick Collie**



- 11 **Johnnie & Becky Collie**
- 26 **John & Rosalee Cline**

If you would like **YOUR** birthdays & anniversary included in the newsletter, please send an email to messiahmech@gmail.com or call **Davina** (746-7134).

Editor's Note

I miss my church family.

I miss those LONG passing-the-peace smiles, handshakes, and hugs. I miss singing with you all and sharing Holy Communion with you at the altar rail. I miss seeing the children run down the hall... and sometimes run down front for the children's sermon. And more...

I am thankful, though, for emails and phone calls, Facebook posts, virtual worship and midweek messages. And I am looking forward to receiving Pastor Ryan and his family in to Mechanicsville in the near future.

Our heritage photos and the video from our 50th Anniversary celebration can be found at our website, messiahmech.com, under the "Members" tab.

If you, too, feel as I do, you may enjoy watching the video and perusing the pictures again, reminding yourself of these memories and the church family that you miss. I know I did.

Here's hoping we'll be back together soon.

- Susie





We pray for each other:

Kenneth Deere; Adam Dworak, Sr.; JoAn Firebaugh; Bill Fulop; Elisabeth Gardner; Werner Gardner; Steve Gilnett; Geoffrey Honan; “Doc” Kondaki; Linda Krupa; Mac McAllister; Roberta McMillen; Nathan and Ruth Schroeder and family; Judy Schw erdtfe ger.

We pray for our extended family and neighbors:

Danny Allen, friend of the Whirleys; **Friends and Family of Bee Newell;** **Dee Schroeder**, sister-in-law of Roger; **Tim Schroeder**, Roger’s nephew; **T.J.**, grandson of the Whirleys; **Elizabeth Zimmerman**, Karen Morris’ daughter-in-law’s aunt.

Pastor Ryan, as he begins his journey with us;
Our veterans, their fellow soldiers & their waiting families, especially Ian Schw erdtfe ger;
Law enforcement, firefighters and first responders;
The people and pastor, Rev. Katherine of All Souls Episcopal & our shared ministry;
Hospitals, nursing homes, & other health care facilities; The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; The World Health Organization; Medical researchers and scientists;
Schools; Workplaces; Government institutions and municipal agencies; For all who travel;

All those persecuted in any way for their faith in Christ, especially in Central African Republic, Morocco, Qatar, and Burkina Faso.¹

¹ Open Doors World WatchList 2020
<http://www.opendoorsusa.org>

To add or remove a name from the prayer list, please call the church office, 746-7134.

Important: The current prayer list was reset on July 5 to begin the third quarter. Please contact **Davina** with names that need to remain on the list. Email her at MessiahMech@gmail.com or phone 746-7134 with your requests.



Our sister in Christ, **Bernice “Bee” Newell** passed into life eternal on July 16, 2020. Bee and her husband Grover were charter members of Messiah and faithful servants and leaders in our church family for many years. Bee is survived by her two sons Scott and Roy and their families. Please pray for the family, as they move through this time of grieving.

“Solutions are not found
 by pointing fingers;
 they are reached
 by extending hands.”

—Aysha Taryam



CFFY – ELCA Recommended Practices for Lifelong Faith Formation: Guided Learning

Guided Learning happens when we visit and revisit Biblical stories, or hear and share each other's faith stories, with a sense of wonder and discovery. Guided learning is not simply about garnering knowledge, but also about wrestling how to live faithfully each day. As effective as church programming can be, it cannot replace home lives filled with faith conversations, rituals, and service to others. The following are recommended practices for different age groups in the area of Guided Learning.

Children on the Way/Infants:

- Read sacred stories and sing beloved hymns to the child while cuddling, building trust, familiarity with stories, and love for reading and music.
- Join a parent group and/or Bible study group to grow in your parenting skills and your own relationship with God.

Preschool-Kindergarten:

- Attend Sunday School
- Learn about Moses; Adam and Eve; Jonah; Jesus, born of Mary and Joseph; and Jesus' death and resurrection. Familiarity can come through listening to stories or music, whether at home or church.
- Participate in day camps like Vacation Bible School.
- Experience church as a warm, welcoming, worship-filled community where they can wonder about God.

Grades 1-5:

- Retell the basics of core Bible stories in his/her own words (e.g., the creation story, Sarah and Abraham, Moses, Mary Magdalene and Jesus).
- Read bible storybooks and Psalms related to these stories.
- Attend day or overnight church camp (e.g. family camp for 2-4 nights).

Grades 6-8:

- Attend Church Camp
- Come up with his/her own favorite Bible verse
- Know a sacred story that most closely relates to their personal story.
- Learn about available resources (e.g., prayer book, faith website).

Grades 9-12:

- Attend a Bible study with peers or adults.
- Dive deeper into Lutheran theology by learning more about the Reformation.
- Share his/her faith story (written or oral) with a group of peers or the congregation.
- Learn about other Christian denominations and religions and how they compare to the ELCA.

Young Adults:

- Recognize the historical context of the Bible as the inspired word of God.
- Read books related to faith.
- Ask questions and wrestle with his/her faith life in an open/nonjudgmental setting.
- Develop a personalized faith narrative drawn from tradition and reflection that strengthens his/her identity and quality of life.

Middle/Senior Adults:

- Become comfortable with learning and discussing the devotional, literary, historical, and theological dimensions of a biblical passage.

Continued on page 7

CFFY

Continued from page 6

- Seek out movies, videos, and books with religious themes and reflect on how those relate to their own personal belief system.
- Model openness to learning, especially during times of transition, by hearing all sides and supporting the church's mission.
- Show familiarity with the lectionary, Creation, Exodus, the prophets, Psalms, Jesus' Life, the early church, the Reformation, and salvation as a gift from God.



Friendship is one of the greatest gifts a human being can receive. It is a bond beyond common goals, common interests or common histories. It is a bond stronger than sexual union can create, deeper than a shared fate can solidify and even more intimate than the bonds of marriage or community.

Friendship is being with the other in joy and sorrow, even when we cannot increase the joy or decrease the sorrow. It is a unity of souls that gives nobility and sincerity to love. Friendship makes all of life shine brightly.

—Henri Nouwen

Bethel Lutheran Church Virtual VBS: "Different by Design" July 27-30, 2020

Congregations of the Virginia Synod are invited to join Bethel Lutheran in Winchester for their Virtual VBS!

Each morning a daily video will be made available on the Bethel Facebook page and the Bethel YouTube channel. It will include recorded songs, skits, animals, crafts, and more.

At 6 PM Monday through Thursday, join a Zoom Crew for a fun sharing time with other campers and their families. Please note, you will have to register for the Zoom Crew. You will receive a daily link sent to your email for the Zoom Crew gathering!

For details, go to

<https://bethelwinchester.com/>

-from "The Weekly Update: Announcements and Stories from Around the Virginia Synod," July 21, 2020



Financial support reminder

To continue in your faithful giving, mail in your offering to the church office, 8154 Atlee Road, Mechanicsville, VA 23111, or use on-line giving through Vanco, which is available on the church website. See messiahmech.com for more details.

Messiah Lutheran Church
8154 Atlee Rd
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In the world
you will have tribulation.
But take heart:
I have overcome the world.
John 16:33

August 2020

Messenger

page 8



The DEADLINE for the
August 2020
edition of ***The Messenger*** is
Sunday, August 16, 2020

Please call **Susie Weaver** with your
submission, hand me a written
submission OR email
susiew51@comcast.net



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midweek message on Wednesday by going
to messiahmech.com and choosing the
Digital tab;
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Tube channel;
or visit us on Facebook at [https://
www.facebook.com/MessiahMech/](https://www.facebook.com/MessiahMech/)
However you choose to be with us, we will
be happy that you did!