

The

# MESSENGER



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

APRIL 2021

## Highlights from the Messiah Church Council Meeting

Messiah Church Council met for a regular monthly council meeting on 3/16/21. The following are highlights of the meeting:

- The church will make gift bags for the children at Easter since we will not be able to have the Easter egg hunt.

- **Pastor Ryan** reported on the Congregational Life of the Church stating that he has some regulars for his weekly zoom Bonhoeffer book study. He and Reverend Katherine have gotten the ecumenical effort for lent on the Mechanicsville Ministry channel on YouTube. He was pleased with the Ash Wednesday drive-in service. He has several members receiving pastoral care due to illness. He completed his re-entry calls with all council members. He is still planning on sending out mail for confirmation classes. He will finalize Holy Week services. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday may start at about 6:30 p.m. Pastor will commune all on Maundy Thursday.

- Council voted to allow All Souls Episcopal Church half donations retroactive to

January 2021 until they return to using our facilities.

- Council members will start their re-entry conversation with all members of the congregation getting prepared for in-person services again in the future.

- Evangelism team has had two new members joining the team: **Cheryl Griffis** and **Linda Mahovatas**.

- Fellowship team is considering having the chili cookoff this fall since we couldn't have it in February.

- Council voted to allow the filming company who used our parking lot as an overflow staging place last fall to do so again in March. They will make a \$750 donation to the church.

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***The Messenger***

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<http://www.messiahmech.com>

**Your 2021 Church Council  
 And Associate Members**

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

**Dianne Absher**      **Anita Philp**  
**Roger Schroeder**    **Diana Sondor**  
**Debbie Walker**

**Council Liaisons**

Christian Formation ..... **Anita Philp**  
 Evangelism ..... **Donna Shaw**  
 Fellowship ..... **Karen Morris**  
 Finance ..... **James Anderson**  
 Property ..... **Roger Schroeder**  
 Social Ministry ..... **Dianne Absher**  
 Stewardship ..... **Diana Sondor**  
 Worship ..... **Debbie Walker**

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

**Church Council highlights**

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- Council is looking for two members to attend the VA synod annual assembly virtually on 6/12. **Anita Philp** said that she would be willing. We need one more delegate.

- **Karen Morris**, Council Secretary



**Pastor Ryan's** office hours are posted for the upcoming week in each Sunday's bulletin. You can reach out to him to schedule an appointment or for any other reason at the following:

[messiahmechpr@gmail.com](mailto:messiahmechpr@gmail.com)  
 And 507-360-7276

Pastor Ryan's day off is Monday.



Pastor's message

## **Christ is risen! He is risen indeed – Alleluia!**

Easter greetings to one and all in this season of resurrection! Of new life and new beginnings! Of rebirth and abundance!

And the world says: “Counterpoint – it’s been over a year of pandemic, and there are still all of these restrictions. The vaccines are rolling out, but there are all of these new strains, and people going on spring break, and still lots of questions about what’s going to happen. Meanwhile, you still are wearing masks and social distancing and worshipping primarily over screens or in your parking lot. Your parking lot. Are you really feeling like this is the season of new life and new beginnings, of rebirth and resurrection?”

Point taken, world. But I am feeling hopeful. Truly. I feel like the tide is finally turning. I feel like there is horizon, finally, to all of this. And in the meantime, we are still ministering to one another; we’re still showing love and care to our neighbors, through MCEF, through our mask-wearing, through our patience, through our adapting, through the new opportunities that are cropping up out of all of this chaos. I give thanks to God for continued presence, and blessings, and guidance, through all of this, even if we can’t see how, or when, we’ll be through it.

I started trying to think of a Bible story that would parallel what we’ve been living through. First, I thought of the Babylonian exile – one of the defining periods of God’s people. They were carried off, far from home, living in isolation, unable to worship how they used to, filled with uncertainty about when they’d get to return. But that doesn’t quite seem to fit; they were in exile due to their sin and idolatry. The exile was an intense and extended

consequence to their actions. I’m not sure if that applies to this virus; at least, not when it started.

What about the story of Jacob working for his uncle Laban? Every time he thought he was about to return, there would be another delay, another wrinkle, another lockdown. We keep having delays and wrinkles, too; but this doesn’t entirely fit our situation, either. Jacob’s circumstances are much more...marriage-y.

Perhaps the backdrop to the book of Revelation? They were a people who needed hope, who couldn’t see how they’d ever get through their current difficulties, who needed a glimpse of God’s power and control in the future to get them through their present. But their situation was one of intense persecution; not so much a deadly, unpredictable disease and human shortcomings making things worse.

Maybe we’re the lepers that Jesus heals? Living apart from the others in the community, longing to be reunited again? That’s more disease-based. Would Jesus break quarantine to heal us? But they were shunned due to rigorous and complicated purity and cleanliness laws as a part of their religion. Close, but still no cigar.

There are other stories of disease, and plagues, and isolation, and exile, and separation in the Bible. But I’m not sure if anything completely parallels what we’re living through. But that’s ok – because God’s response is, in the end, consistent, no matter the situation. Look at the composite of these stories I lifted up: to Israel in exile, God extends forgiveness for their sinfulness and mistakes, and does bring them home. To Jacob, even with all of his trickster tendencies and scheming, God brings a covenant, and a reconciliation with his twin brother Esau, and an eventual return home, too. To the persecuted

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**Christ is risen!**

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people Revelation is written to, they receive the promise of God’s ultimate authority and the perspective that the suffering wouldn’t win the day – not finally. They’d be gathered in their heavenly home, around the throne. And to the lepers Jesus does indeed bring healing and restoration to their community.

No matter what, in these stories and so many others, God is with us. There will be times like this, of separation and hardship; but God is with us, through it all. Constant. And God always, in time, brings us home. Back to each other, back into right relationship with our Creator, sins forgotten and forgiven, tears dried, ailments healed. That is no different for us today: God is with us, and God will bring us home.

So yes: Welcome to this Easter season of resurrection, the season of new life and new beginnings, the season of rebirth and abundance! It’s more than just a day, or a season; it’s life in Christ. We celebrate it this year with renewed zeal – this time of pandemic will pass, and God will bring forth new life even from this.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed – Alleluia!

**-Pastor Ryan**



April 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	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	

- 1 6:30 PM MAUNDY THURSDAY
- 2 6:30 PM GOOD FRIDAY
- 4 EASTER SUNDAY  
10:45 AM Messiah Lutheran: Worship
- 5 Secretary on Vacation
- 6 Secretary on Vacation
- 7 Secretary on Vacation
- 8 Secretary on Vacation
- 9 Secretary on Vacation
- 11 10:45 AM Messiah Lutheran: Worship
- 14 6:30 PM Women's Bible Study
- 17 Church Council Retreat
- 18 10:45 AM Messiah Lutheran: Worship  
12:00 PM Shepherd's Team Meeting
- 20 6:15 PM Council Meeting
- 21 Administrative Professionals Day
- 25 10:45 AM Messiah Lutheran: Worship
- 28 6:30 PM Women's Bible Study

**\* Watch the Messiah website and Facebook page for any updates**



**Thanks**

**To the Cleaning Team, Covid-19 edition,** for faithful service during this pandemic, making it possible for the rest of us to attend our worship services, keeping the church building safe.

If you would like to volunteer, contact **Susie Weaver.**



- 5 **Dak Kondaki**
- 8 **Sherry Kondaki**
- 12 **Annette Buckholtz**
- 14 **Allen Starrett**



- 17 **Bill & Susie Weaver**

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



## MCEF News

Today it feels like summer is here and the clothing closets are doing the same. Please, only spring and summer clothing that is clean and usable, there is no space for winter clothing. Other needs include boys new underwear (sizes S, M, M and L), small to medium sized men's jeans, men's short sleeved colored T-shirts, all sizes and tops for women in small and medium sizes.

The linen closet is low on Double and King sheets (no stains or rips please).

Food pantry needs include spinach, instant oatmeal and grits packages, pancake mix and syrup, toothbrushes (new) and jellies of any kind.

Thank you for your continued support of your neighbors in need. Check out [4mcef.com](http://4mcef.com) for more information.

- **Gladys Hubert**



Dear Messiah family,

Thank you for all your thoughts, cards & prayers the last couple of months. God has heard our prayers & has brought me safely thus far. May God bless you as you have blessed me & my family.

Your sister in Christ,  
**Lois**

Dear Friends,

Thank you for thinking of our family during this difficult time at the sudden loss of our son, **Kenny**. We truly appreciate your telephone calls with warm words of comfort and your thoughtful cards with shared memories. They all helped us and highlighted what a special person Kenny was. We also would like to thank **Pastor Ryan** for his prayers, phone calls, and concern.

In love and peace,  
**Lynn, Leroy, and Lorraine Deere**



## We pray for each other:

**Debbie Anton; Johnnie Collie; Leroy Deere; Adam Dworak, Sr.; Bonnie Dworak; Ted Ford; Bill Fulop; Steve & Sue Gilnett; "Doc" Kondaki; Mac McAllister; Lois Schroeder; Ruth Schroeder; Judy Schwerdtfeger.**

## We pray for our extended family and neighbors:

**The Allen Family**, relatives of the Whirleys; **Bonnie Altobelli**, sister of Brenda Laveck; **Cathy Cadd**, friend of Dianne Absher; **Dwayne Collie**, Johnnie's brother; **Robin Dillon**, friend of Dianne Absher; **John Drazenovich**, former member of Messiah; **Al Driggers**, friend of the Whirleys; **Kathy Fleming**, cousin of the Schwerdtfegers; **Family and Friends of Lois Florio**, Pastor Lou's mother; **Family, Friends, and Fellow LEO of Capt. Donald Lambert, Jr.**; **Carolyn Leonard**, sister of James Anderson; **Junie Loving**, friend of John Mahovtas; **Suzanne McEwen**, friend of Linda Mahovtas; **Renee McLaughlin**, friend of Charlie and Judy; **Lynn Mesco**, friend of Rosalee Cline; **Michael Morin**, son of Sally & Charlie Bennett; **Lori Mullen**, friend of Dianne Absher; **Christina Nibali**, sister of Anita Philp; **Pat Ruffner and Mr. Ruffner**, friend of the Whirleys; **Roger Sabanosh**, cousin of Karen Morris; **Dee Schroeder**, sister-in-law of Roger; **Ken Schroeder**, relative of the Schroeders; **Tim Schroeder**, Roger's nephew; **Charles Schwerdtfeger, Jr.**, son of Charlie; **Karen Seward**, sister

of Debbie Walker; **Sandy Street**, sister of Donna Shaw;

**Elaine Turner**, friend of Becky Collie.

**Our veterans, their fellow soldiers & their waiting families, All 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; Those affected by fires and hurricanes and winter storms; For all who travel; All those persecuted in any way for their faith in Christ, especially in Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Maldives, and Egypt.**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Open Doors World WatchList 2021  
<http://www.opendoorsusa.org>

## Prayer list to be reset

The current prayer list will be reset on April 4, to begin the second quarter. Please contact Davina with names that need to remain on the list. Email her at [MessiahMech@gmail.com](mailto: MessiahMech@gmail.com) or phone 746-7134 with your requests.





Women's Bible Study continues to meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm in the fellowship hall with proper social distancing in place and masks required.

We will be wrapping up in April our study "The Rock, the Road, and the Rabbi" by Kathie Lee Gifford. Next study is to be determined. If interested in joining us or purchasing a book/study guide please contact

**Valerie Williams**

at [vswilliams2005@gmail.com](mailto:vswilliams2005@gmail.com).

Hope to see you there!



April 22nd is Earth Day – a day that many of us in the U.S. celebrate the gift of God's Creation and re-examine our care of it.

During this pandemic, some of us have already started to "reuse, reduce, and recycle." Many of us still have lots of "stuff" ready to be removed from our homes: some of them to be shared with others, some to be used in another way, and, finally some moved out to create new space in our drawers and closets.

Additionally, you may consider activities such as planting trees and gardens, wel-



## Exploring Personal Evangelism: Jump Start #2:

Last month you were given a tip to ask God to let you see other people as He sees them, lost sheep for whom Jesus died.

This month's Jump Start asks you to: Ask God to renew YOUR fire for HIM.

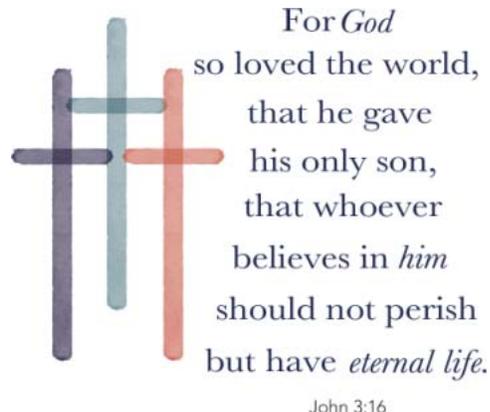
People do evangelism best when they're most amazed by Jesus, when they feel Him working in their lives. Add this to your daily prayers and see what happens. Although you may be challenged, please know that God will never ask you to do something He knows you're not ready for. He is still your shepherd and always will be.

- **Donna Shaw**

coming birds and other pollinators to your yard, and ridding your home of e-waste and household hazardous waste at a recycling local event in your area.

Hanover County will hold an e-waste event on Saturday, April 17th, at the Mechanicsville Solid Waste Convenience Center at 7427 Verdi Lane, from 8 am to noon. There will be a "hazardous waste and shredding of personal information and documents" recycling event on Saturday, April 24th at the Mechanicsville Trash and Recycling Center, at the same address. You can call the Hanover County Department of Public Works at 804-365-6181, for more information. General information is available at <https://www.hanovercounty.gov/230/What-Can-Be-Recycled>

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## An Easter prayer

From the grave's depths, Lord Jesus Christ, you emerged, breaking the hold of sin, death and hell, that those who trust in you might share in your righteousness, life and beloved community with God the Father and all God's children. We bow in awe before your majesty, giving thanks for your grace extended so bountifully to us. By the power of your Spirit who lives within us, may we share the astonishing news of your resurrection with others, that they also may know your saving grace.

Amen.

The DEADLINE for the  
**May, 2021**  
edition of ***The Messenger*** is  
**Sunday, April 18th**  
(Please contact me,  
if you need a "grace period")

Please call **Susie Weaver** with your  
submission, hand me a written  
submission OR email  
[susiew51@comcast.net](mailto:susiew51@comcast.net)



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