

The MESSENGER



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

FEBRUARY 2022

Highlights from the Messiah Church Council meeting

Messiah Church Council conducted a Zoom meeting for a regular monthly council meeting on January 11, 2022. The following are highlights of the meeting:

- We added a few dates to the **church calendar**: New date for the Annual Reporting meeting will be February 6, 2022, with a backup date of February 13. Installation of new council members to be on February 13.
- **Pastor Ryan** reported on the **Congregational Life of the Church** stating that he felt Christmas Eve service was a good mix for both younger and older members who attended. Pastor held a memorial service for **Mac McAllister** right before the church closed for 3 Sundays. Pastor had an Epiphany blessing online and Donna said it got many positive comments online.
- The **Treasurer's Report** was reviewed and there was a good finish to 2021 and start to 2022 with some members' RMD's coming in to the church.
- The **Fellowship Team** will consider holding the Chili Cookoff a little later when the pandemic's spike is down and the positivity rate is much lower.
- The **Finance Team** had information from our church insurance company that our current coverage will be replaced in March by a new policy. This was initiated by the insurance company itself.
- **Social Ministry Team's** next project for the members of the congregation will be kits from World Relief.
- **Worship Team** reported that **Sally Bennett** will be retiring as chairperson for the Worship Team and **Karen Morris** will take the position in the next month or so.

Due to the extreme spike and high positivity rate of COVID the Council decided to close the church for three Sundays, in hopes this would break the cycle so we can more safely return to in-person worship.

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

Your 2022 Church Council And Associate Members

Dianne Absher
Theresa Gigante
Marilyn Gunn
Anita Philp
Roger Schroeder
Diana Sondor
Debbie Walker
Heather Williams

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

Thank you to **Anita Philp** and **Diana Sondor** for serving a second term on the church council. Thanks, also, to **Theresa Gigante, Marilyn Gunn,** and **Heather Williams** for serving their first term.

Council members are to be installed on February 13th. Officers and liaison assignment will be determined shortly afterward.

Highlights from Council meeting Continued from page 1

When returning to in-person worship, we need to expect that all persons wear masks and have fellowship outside in the parking lot.

We took down the sign dedicating sides of the church to social distancing, because no one was really following it; and, if all are wearing masks, it isn't necessary.

Council thanked out-going council members **James Anderson, Karen Morris** and **Donna Shaw** for their service on council and as the executive team.

- **Karen Morris,**
Church Council Secretary



Pastor Ryan's office hours are posted for the upcoming week in each Sunday's bulletin. Schedule an appointment via messiahmechpr@gmail.com And 507-360-7276

Pastor Ryan's day off is Monday.

Pastor's message

True story: my mom once warned me not to pray for patience. She said that she had prayed for patience in the past, and had had a chance to use it ever since.

I think all of us have had our patience stretched over the last two years. COVID especially comes to mind. As I write this article, we are back in virtual-only mode at church during this latest wave of the omicron variant. How deep into the Greek alphabet are we going to go? No one wanted to go back to this, but we continue to try to follow Luther's Fifth Commandment advice: "We are to fear and love God, so that we neither endanger nor harm the lives of our neighbors, but instead help and support them in all of life's needs." I completely stand by that; but perhaps patience has limits?

My patience has also been strained by the emotional climate of our country as of late. I carry with me a constant baseline of worry and fatigue over the polarization and the lack of empathy. I am deeply troubled by the heightened/more blatant levels of racism and discrimination; the continued instances of violence; by many reports of people trying to whitewash or glaze over our nation's history, when we need to learn from the good, the bad and the ugly alike. There are a lot of people dwelling in echo chambers and stewing in rage. I lament to God over these things, and again: my patience wears thin with worry for our society's future.

I was reminded recently that patience is not a posture of tolerance. Patience does not mean just putting up with others, outlasting them until things go the way you want them to.

Patience is not a posture of holding others at arms' length until the episode, the annoyance, the difficulty passes.

No, patience is a posture of love. A posture of embrace. A posture of solidarity. Sticking with folks, with situations, even when they let you down or stress you out or seem interminable. Patience may feel like a burden, like my mom was joking around about – "You'll always have a chance to use it!" – but, like any other gift from God, we receive it in order to turn around and share it. To put it to good use. To bring about even a sliver of God's kingdom here and now.

I was reminded of this when I was looking at the lessons from 1 Corinthians 12 for January 16th and 23rd. And when I realized that 1 Corinthians 13 came right after it. In my pastor-trained head, 1 Corinthians 12 = the Body of Christ chapter. 1 Corinthians 13 = the Love chapter. 12 = spiritual gifts and the godly interplay of unity and diversity: many members, one body. 13 = the one that gets read at weddings.

But 13 actually flows directly from 12: right after Paul teaches the Corinthians that their spiritual gifts do not create a hierarchy to be abused, but rather constitute a body of parts that work in concert together, chapter 13 starts like this: "If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing."

Gifts without love are empty and distracting. Love is the foundation of every one of God's gifts. Paul then goes on about love (notice the first adjective): "Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on

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Pastor's message

Continued from page 3

its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

To be patient with others – whether over COVID restrictions or differing opinions – is a posture of love. To bear all things – especially in the pursuit of working against injustice – is a posture of love, and a witness. To endure all things in Christ's name is holy, a cruciform posture of love.

I still respect mom's caution not to pray for patience – after all, one must be careful what one wishes for, right? However, I *will* surely pray for God to adjust my posture.

In Christ,

Pastor Ryan

MCEF News



- The month of December saw an increase in numbers: 96 households were provided assistance with food. Donations were very generous for holiday bags.
- Current needs are mayonnaise, catsup and jellies.
- Spring and summer clothing will be accepted beginning in March.
- February is dental health month and donations of toothbrushes and toothpaste are appreciated.

Thank you for your continued support. For more information, go to 4mcef.com.

- **Gladys Hubert**

CFFY: Christian Formation For You



Greetings Messiah Lutheran Family!

With cold weather and a sharp spike of COVID infections, we have curtailed our services and in-person meetings once again. Feels a little like Groundhog's day, (or year perhaps) and is appropriate to the month of February.

Also appropriate to this month is the theme of "Love", celebrated on Valentine's day, February 14th. While society emphasizes romantic love and encourages the giving of flowers, candy and jewelry, this is but one expression of love. As followers of Christ Jesus, we have been shown the penultimate example of unconditional, sacrificial love.

The world is weary of this new normal, wherein this ever-evolving virus interrupts what we would like to do with our time, broadly characterized as "gathering together." In this moment, we are showing love to one another by doing what is humanly possible to protect one another from spreading the contagion.

With hope that we will be back together soon, please join us on Sunday mornings for Sunday school. **Wendy DeGraff** and **Lois Schroeder** lead our school aged children in the Whirl, a series that follows the lectionary. **Becky Collie** leads the Youth, middle & high school ages and will be delving into the Parables. **Pastor Ryan** leads the Adults, currently studying different religions using Our Neighbors Faith. Women's Bible Study meets on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month and is continuing to watch and discuss *The Chosen*.

Love & Peace
Anita Philp

February 2022						
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					



- 2 **Taylor Starrett**
- 7 **Jean Martin**
- 21 **Victoria Gustafson**
- 23 **Grace Anderson**

- 1
- 6 10:45 AM Messiah Lutheran:
Worship Service - remote *
- 13 9:15 AM Christian Formation
10:45 AM Messiah Lutheran:
Worship Service
12 noon Annual Reporting Meeting
- 15 6:15 PM Council Meeting
- 20 9:15 AM Christian Formation
10:45 AM Messiah Lutheran:
Worship Service
- 21 President's Day (Office Closed)
- 27 TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY
9:15 AM Christian Formation
10:45 AM Messiah Lutheran:
Worship Service
- 28

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



Beyond candy hearts and roses

March

- 1
- 2 ASH WEDNESDAY

* Remote services will be broadcast LIVE on our Facebook page and recorded for later access via our YouTube channel

⇒ **Watch the messiahmech.com website and Facebook pages for any updates and changes**

The first half of February seems dominated by pink and red, cards and candy. But people not in a loving romantic relationship can sometimes feel left out of the festivities. Of course, all people need love — and certainly love is not limited to the romantic kind. Author Leo Buscaglia, who became known as “Dr. Love” for writing about the topic, said, “Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”

Jesus taught that loving one another is second only in importance to loving God (Matthew 22:37-40), and that when we love one another, God lives in us (1 John 4:12). There are so many ways to do that — beyond candy hearts and roses! But Valentine’s Day is as good a reminder as any.



We pray for each other:

Debbie Anton; Annette Buckholtz; Bruce Carr; Johnnie Collie; Adam Dworak, Sr.; Bonnie Dworak; Jackie Garbett; Steve & Sue Gilnett; Karen Jones; Ruth Schroeder, Ken Whirley.

We pray for our extended family and neighbors:

Dwayne Collie, Johnnie's brother; **Griffin Deere**, brother of Leroy Deere; **Family & Friends of Roger Sabanosh**, cousin of Karen Morris; **Ken & Dee Schroeder**, brother and sister-in-law of Roger; **Tim Schroeder**, Roger's nephew; **Sandy Siler**, grandmother of Emily Gunn; **Tyson**, grandson of Erna Jung

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; All those affected by COVID, in all areas of life, and for a way forward; Hospitals, nursing homes, & other health care facilities; The CDC and other medical researchers and scientists; Schools, workplaces, government institutions and municipal agencies; All those impacted by acts of violence, at home and abroad; For all who travel; All those persecuted in any way for their faith in Christ, especially in Saudi Arabia, Myanmar, Sudan, and Iraq.¹

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

The current prayer list was reset on January 1 to begin the first 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.*

Words of Evangelism

"Evangelism is not a professional job for a few trained men, but is instead the unrelenting responsibility of every person who belongs to the company of Jesus."

- D. Elton Trueblood



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February 2022

Messenger

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The LORD
makes firm
the steps
of the one
who delights
in him.

PSALM 37:23; NIV

The DEADLINE for the
March 2022
edition of
The Messenger is
Sunday, February 13
(Please contact me,
if you need a “grace period”)

Please call **Susie Weaver** with your
submission, hand me a written
submission OR email

Check out Messiah’s videos on

