

# The MESSENGER



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

APRIL 2025

## Banner Team

We are almost finished with our second banner and we are excited to show it to everyone! Banner Team will meet on Tuesday, April 1 at 1:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall. We will not meet on Tuesday, April 15. We look forward to starting a new banner in May.



Blessings,

**Nancy Berg**

(805)550-5763

heartgaze495@gmail.com

## Women's Bible Study

In April the Women's Bible Study groups will meet as follows:

Morning WBS will meet at 10:00 on Wednesday, April 9 and 23 in the fellowship hall as usual. The evening group will meet on Tuesday, April 8 at 6:30 p.m. and on Wednesday, April 23 at 6:30 p.m. We will be discussing chapter 5 on the first date and chapter 6 on the second date in the *Love Wins* book. Please join us!

For information, talk to **Marilyn Gunn, Donna Combs**, or **Nancy Berg**.

## Youth Choir

The youth choir will be practicing on Sunday, April 6th in the large meeting room, and singing in church on Easter Sunday, April 20th.

Blessings, **Nancy Berg**

## Y.O.U.T.H. in Action

(Youth Outreach to Uplift and Thrive in Holiness)

The Youth Group would like to thank everyone who helped make this year's Community Yard Sale and Craft Fair successful. Whether you donated items, bought donuts, contributed to the bake sale, helped spread the word, volunteered your time and talents, stopped by to shop, or prayed for us, we appreciate your support. Messiah's big heart was on full display for the community, and everyone had a wonderful time. The youth raised nearly \$3400 for their 2027 NYG trip to Minneapolis!

April is a "FUNtastic" fellowship month! After service on April 27th, the youth group will compete to see who can escape first at Hidden Gems Escape Rooms.

We can't help but notice, there are some new families in the pews!

If you would like to be added to the MLC Youth email list, contact Tracey Anderson at [tander1021@yahoo.com](mailto:tander1021@yahoo.com). Grades K-12 are welcome.

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### ***The Messenger***

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

## **Church Council Highlights**

Easter Breakfast traditions will continue. May need a slight menu change due to the rising cost of eggs; eggs may be skipped completely but there will still be pancakes and sausage.

Yard Sale and Craft Fair - despite the weather we had a great turnout and were able to raise \$3000 dollars for the youth group. Vendors all had good things to say regarding our hospitality and helpfulness. Excellent event overall.

Treasury Report- Council reviewed the treasury report and commented on how well put together it was and wanted to thank Emily and Dona for their hard work in clarifying the ledger.

The next Council meeting will be on Tuesday, April 29.

## **Your 2025 Church Council And Associate Members**

**Rosalee Duke  
Sharon Addair  
Cory Gooch**

**Council President  
Vice-President  
Secretary**

**Teresa Gigante  
Cheryl Griffis  
John Shea**

**Daren Williams  
Heather Williams**

### **Council Liaisons**

**Heather Williams  
Cory Gooch  
Teresa Gigante  
John Shea  
Sharon Addair  
Daren Williams  
Cheryl Griffis**

**Christian Formation  
Evangelism/Digital Team  
Fellowship  
Property  
Social Ministry  
Stewardship  
Worship**

**Emily Reagan  
Dona Polesky  
Sue Gilnett, RN**

**Treasurer  
Financial Secretary  
Parish Nurse**

### **Team Leaders**

**Donna Shaw  
Becky Collie  
Sharon Addair  
Debbie Walker**

**Evangelism  
Fellowship  
Social Ministry  
Worship**



**Pastor Ryan's office hours** are posted for the upcoming week in each Sunday's bulletin. Schedule an appointment via [messiahmechpr@gmail.com](mailto:messiahmechpr@gmail.com) and 507-360-7276.

Pastor Ryan's day off is Monday.

The DEADLINE for the **MAY 2025** edition of ***The Messenger*** is **April 25**.

Please contact me if you need a "grace period."

Please send your submission by email to **Heather Heckel ([messiahmech@gmail.com](mailto:messiahmech@gmail.com))**



## Pastor's Letter

I've heard people talk about having a "personal relationship with Jesus." I guess I've always had a little trouble with how that works, or how it looks. In this month of April we will hear once again the stories of Jesus's palm-strewn entry into Jerusalem, as well as his betrayal and arrest. We will hear the story of the last supper and the new commandment to love one another as Jesus loves us. And we will hear the stories of how Jesus was mocked, beaten, abandoned, denied, crucified, and buried. We will hear the story about God's ultimate response to sin, which culminates in Jesus alive and raised, yet still wounded; of the tomb empty and the news spreading. And after all of this, Jesus ascends once more into heaven, sending us the Holy Spirit to counsel and guide and equip us, we who are the body of Christ, the church of Christ in this world, until his return.

It's that last part that gives me trouble with the "personal relationship with Jesus." Jesus isn't here, in the flesh, and hasn't been for around two thousand years. I admire many long-deceased authors and artists and actors and athletes and thinkers and theologians. They have shaped me and inspired me. But I don't have a personal relationship with them – that's a two-way street. I can read Jesus's teachings in the Bible, I can see the Spirit working throughout history and all around me today. But that's not the same thing as a personal relationship, either. What does that even mean?

I taught a workshop at the EPIC event in March that has maybe shed a little light on this for me. The workshop was about how regular interaction with the Bible, either through individual reading and devotion or group Bible study and conversation, shapes us. It forms our biblical identity. I love leading discussions on the Bible, and hearing what other people learn from Scripture. To prepare for the workshop I had to take

a step back and examine what it is I actually do to prepare for and lead such a conversation. Why do I do the things I do? Here are a couple of the insights I discovered, and shared, for the workshop: "Bible studies that help shape our Christian identities also try their best to *model* Christian community. You encourage questions. You invite discussion. You affirm what people share. You show that it's ok not to have all the answers. You pray at the beginning, or end, or both, of the time together. You incorporate what people have shared into that prayer. They are heard. They are loved. That experience that their sharing and contributions are needed by others...You support everyone and trust that it's ok to venture into challenging topics sometimes, especially if a lot of trust has been built up together. You invite but don't force the more shy participants to share. You give thanks that everyone is there. You ask people what they see and hear and wonder and think about what you are talking about. You recognize that there are different learning styles...If our identity is rooted in the Bible, in its themes of grace and neighbor-love and the body of Christ and acceptance and forgiveness and then some more grace, then we'd best be demonstrating that in our conversations."

"These conversations, discussions, and studies, are not an end unto themselves...[I]t's not just to learn facts; it is to be open to being shaped biblically and to be more attuned to God. And that identity naturally leads to mission – to the sharing of the good news, in word and deed, in your lives. What you learn, and the way you are shaped, should have an impact on your relationships, your priorities, your whole life. And then you bring those lived experiences back to the discussion and the shaping continues, for yourself and others."

So: maybe *that's* what it means to have a "personal relationship with Jesus." To immerse yourself in God's Word, every day, and to interact with others who are doing the same, and to live out your faith. Until you are shaped by this Word, and by God's grace, more and more Christlike.

*Continued, p. 4*

## Pastor's Letter

Continued from page 3

The relationship with Christ isn't like the relationship I have with a person in the room with me; it's more about a relationship with Christ who is at work within me, and who is at work within others, and always becoming more attuned. I invite and challenge you all to be shaped by the stories of Holy Week and Easter this month, and I hope you'll share what you discover.

In Christ,  
Pastor Ryan

### Evangelism Quote

*And the offer of the gospel - the offer of Easter - is simply this: Jesus can carry us through the grave to eternal life.*  
- Jonathan Griffiths



♥< ♥< ♥< **PAL** ♥< ♥< ♥<

The PAL girls have been busy working toward the goal of 25 quilts to send to Lutheran World Relief. There are currently 24 quilts plus a few more in progress that will be blessed on Quilt Sunday, May 4 during the worship service. They will be packed and transported to an ingathering location, Bethany Christian Church in Richmond and loaded onto the truck bound for the LWR warehouse in Baltimore. Distribution occurs from that location. Many thanks for all the donations of quilt fabric necessary to accomplish this task.

### Next Meetings:

**April 2, April 16, April 30**

For more information, contact **Glady Hubert** (814) 449-1392.

### Will You Help All Souls??



We need at least 50 subscribers of our YouTube Channel so that we can live-stream our worship services to YouTube.

**Steps are:** Go to YouTube.com - In the search bar, type @AllSoulsVA - Click on our YouTube Channel - Click "Subscribe"

Anyone Can Subscribe!  
Please help us get to 50 or more!



## MCEF News

February was a busy month, especially considering that many days the OSS was closed and rides were canceled due to weather. There were 134 visits to the OSS for food with 185 bags of food received by clients and 56 clients assisted with clothing and 21 assisted with linens. Senior rides provided 94 rides to seniors for doctor appointments and essential services. Financial assistance was provided to 6 households. MCEF assists the backpack program in Mechanicsville schools by supplementing items for the 6 meals provided to 123 children at risk each weekend.

The closets are in transition to spring and summer clothing. The excess of winter items is being funnelled to other groups who are in need. Needs include girls' undies and socks, all sizes. Linen closet needs full and queen size sheets in good condition. Food pantry is in need of canned meats, Spam, tuna, chicken, stew, etc. All donations are greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Donna Combs has been nominated for the Spirit of Volunteerism award of Hanover County. The program will be April 8 at 7:30 at Atlee High School. All are welcome to attend.

**Glady Hubert**



**Join Messiah on Facebook!**

**Follow us on**



**Instagram**



Send Us Your Photos!

Please contact **Donna Shaw**, if you have any questions.

**Check out Messiah's videos on**



**YouTube**



## April 2025

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			

12 **Annette Buckholtz**14 **Allen Starret**

## April

- 1 1:00 pm Banner Team
- 2 9:00 am PAL Quilt Group
- 6:30 pm Midweek Soup Supper
- 3 7:00 pm Choir Practice
- 6 9:15 am All Souls Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 9:15 am Messiah Christian Formation
- 10:45 am Messiah Lutheran Worship\* First Sunday Fellowship
- 8 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study
- 9 10:00 am Women's Bible Study
- 6:30 pm Midweek Soup Supper
- 10 7:00 pm Choir Practice
- 13 Palm Sunday
- 9:15 am All Souls Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 9:15 am Messiah Christian Formation
- 10:45 am Messiah Lutheran Worship\*
- 16 9:00 am PAL Quilt Group
- 17 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Service
- 18 7:00 pm Good Friday Service
- 20 Easter Sunday
- 8:45 am Easter Breakfast
- 9:30 am Easter Egg Hunt
- 9:15 am All Souls Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 10:45 am Messiah Lutheran Worship\* Manna Sunday
- 23 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study
- 10:00 am Women's Bible Study
- 24 7:00 pm Choir Practice
- 27 9:15 am All Souls Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 9:15 am Messiah Christian Formation
- 10:45 am Messiah Lutheran Worship\*
- 29 6:15 pm Messiah Church Council Meeting
- 30 9:00 am PAL Quilt Group
- 31 7:00 pm Choir Practice

17 **Bill & Susie Weaver**

If you would like YOUR birthdays & anniversaries included in the newsletter, please send an email to **messiahmech@gmail.com** or call **the church office** (804-746-7134).

\*That video will be available later on the church website and YouTube. Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/MessiahMech/>

**Watch [messiahmech.com](http://messiahmech.com) and our Facebook page for any updates and changes to the calendar.**





### We pray for each other:

**Debbie Anton; Bruce Carr; Lynn Deere; Adam Dworak, Sr.; Bonnie Dworak; Angel Fernandez; Ted Ford; Jackie Garbett; Steve & Sue Gilnett; Geoffrey Honan; Karen Jones; Jean Martin; Roberta McMillen; Patrick Reagan; Roger Schroeder; Ruth Schroeder; Susie Weaver**

### We pray for our extended family and neighbors:

**JC Absher**, brother-in-law of Dianne Absher; **Emily and Justin Aheimer**, granddaughter and grandson-in-law of Marilyn Gunn; **Jessica Cassidy**, friend of the Andersons; **Dwayne Collie**, brother of Johnnie; **Griffin Deere**, brother of Leroy Deere; **Jameson Gilnett**, grandson of Steve and Sue; **James Griffis**, grandson of Lee & Cheryl; **Ethan Hamilton and family**, former members; **Michelle & Tevin Harris; Lars Honan**, brother of Geoffrey Honan; **Jim Jump**, friend of the Collies; **Becky Kuhn**, aunt of Liz Radtke; **Matt Linka**, son-in-law of John & Linda Mahovtas; **Iris Locke**, mother of Davina Winn; **Janet Monge**, nephew's wife of Angel & Carmen Fernandez; **Sandy Nelson**, sister of Cheryl Griffis; **Diane Nicholson**, friend of Becky Collie; **Jim Rightnour**, son of John & Margi; **Tim Schroeder**, nephew of Roger Schroeder; **Addison Senters**, friend of the Andersons; **Marina Szabo**, mother of Stephanie Bergreen, **Brad Shinault**, friend of the Whirleys; **Barbara Townsend**, friend of the Whirleys; **Benjamin Waters**, grand-nephew of Marilyn Gunn.

**Our veterans, their fellow soldiers & their waiting families; All law enforcement, firefighters & first responders; The people and pastor, Rev. Katherine, of All Souls Episcopal & our shared ministry; All those impacted by acts of violence, at home and abroad; All who travel**

### **\*\*Prayer List Has Been Reset\*\***

Please contact the **church office** with names that need to be ADDED or REMOVED from the list. Send emails to **MessiahMech@gmail.com** or phone 804-746-7134 with your requests.

### Meet Messiah's Mutual Ministry Team

The Mutual Ministry Team's primary function, according to the constitution and by-laws, "is to aid the pastor in effective congregational ministry." This takes a couple of shapes:

First, the mutual ministry team is there to receive all types of feedback from congregation members. They can also answer questions about the ministries of the pastor to the congregation. Second, they are a group that is available for the pastor to go to for counsel, or to consult as a sounding board. In short, they "assist the pastor in developing and maintaining a healthy working relationship" with the congregation.

Of course, you can always check in with **Pastor Ryan** directly. However, if you'd rather check in with someone first, your mutual ministry team is there for you: **Sharon Addair, Doug Duke, Anita Philp, John Shea, and Susie Weaver.**

Please let any of us know if you have any questions, or if you'd ever like to have a conversation. Thanks!



### PALM SUNDAY

9:15 am Christian Formation  
10:45 am Worship Service



### EASTER SUNDAY



8:45 am



### MAUNDY THURSDAY

7:00 pm Worship Service

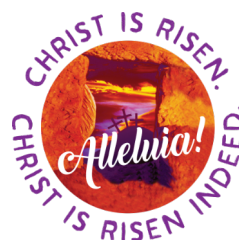


9:30 am



### GOOD FRIDAY

7:00 pm Worship Service



10:45 am Worship Service