

The MESSENGER



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

May 2025

Banner Team

Messiah's Banner Team will meet on Tuesday, May 20th at 1:00 p.m. in the church fellowship hall. We will be starting a new project with some interesting new techniques. Come join us – and please bring your own scissors.

Blessings,
Nancy Berg
(805)550-5763
heartgaze495@gmail.com



Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study Groups will meet on Wednesday May 14 and Wednesday May 28. They are currently reading Rob Bell's book LOVE WINS. The morning group meets at 10:00 a.m. in the fellowship hall. They will be reading chapters 7 & 8. The evening group meets at 6:30 p.m. also in the fellowship hall. They will be reading chapters 6 & 7. Please feel free to join us at either time.

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

Youth Choir

Thank you to the Youth Choir for singing on Easter. Your music was truly appreciated!!! We will start working on a new song to sing on Pentecost Sunday, June 8. Join us after worship on Sundays May 18th and 25th, and June 1. All youth are welcome to join us!

Blessings, **Nancy Berg**

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

(Youth Outreach to Uplift and Thrive in Holiness)

Last month's event theme was fellowship. The group took a vote: bowling or escape room. Escape room won by a landslide. With 20 youth signed up, we were able to reserve all three challenge rooms at Hidden Gems Escape Rooms in Mechanicsville. Over lunch, we dove deeper into Daniel and the Lion's Den and the importance of staying faithful in all situations and turning to others for support. All three teams escaped successfully with time to spare. Everyone had a great time.

This month, the youth group event theme is SERVICE. On May 17th, we will participate in a river clean-up day along the Upper James River with our friends at Kitchen 33 and the American River Restoration group.

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

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Office hours:

Mon/Wed/Fri 10:00 am-3:00 pm




Tue/Thur 12:00 pm-5:00 pm

VISIT OUR MLC WEBSITE:

<http://www.messiahmech.com>

Church Council Highlights

- Easter Day was well attended. Breakfast was excellent and the kids had a great time with the Easter Egg Hunt.
- Yard Sale- over three thousand dollars raised! All the vendors said we were very helpful and kind.
- The new treasury report has been well received and the council has a much easier time tracking and discussing fundings.
- Congratulations to our graduating seniors Grace Anderson and Michael Sondor.
- A warm welcome to Cathyrn O'Brien to the congregation.
- The final mortgage payment is on May 1st with a celebration to come on May 25th.

 Join Messiah on Facebook!	 Send Us Your Photos! Please contact Donna Shaw , if you have any questions.
 Follow us on Instagram	 Check out Messiah's videos on YouTube

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 and 507-360-7276.

Pastor Ryan's day off is Monday.

The DEADLINE for the **JUNE 2025** edition of **The Messenger** is **May 25**.

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

Please send your submission by email to

Heather Heckel (messiahmech@gmail.com)



Pastor's Letter

The day I'm writing this (April 29th – I know it's late, but I just got back from time off), three things happened. First, I heard on the news that the venerable Rev. Dr. William Barber II had been arrested, along with some other clergy, for praying in the Capitol Rotunda. As far as I know, they weren't being antagonistic or disruptive; they were praying that legislation might serve the poor and not do harm. I have no objection to a prayer like that, and much more harmful voices have been heard in that room that did not lead to arrests. I have no doubt that Jesus would have done the same.

Second, I met with Debbie and Cheryl to plan the liturgy and pick hymns for the rest of the Easter season. The readings (and hymns) for May 25th really struck me – a story in Acts about Paul sharing the gospel with Lydia, and she and her household being baptized; a vision from Revelation where the new city of God that comes down to earth has no need of sun, moon, or lights, because the Lamb is the light that never fades, along with the tree of life whose leaves are for the healing of the nations; and Jesus promising, before his departure, to send the Holy Spirit to the disciples, and saying: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."

Third, I checked my mailbox and found a letter from GraceInside, Virginia's prison chaplain service, asking for our prayers and support. One of my colleagues, Pastor Paul Christian in Petersburg, used to serve as a chaplain in prison ministry. The work they do is transformative and some of the purest sharing of the gospel you'll ever hear about.

In this Easter season, we celebrate the promise and the joy of the resurrection. We say Alleluia! that Jesus is risen, risen indeed. Alleluia! And we talk about how we, too, are resurrection people. We proclaim that, as baptized Christians, we have been made into new creations. We live in hope for the resurrection from the dead, and we also live changed lives now, the future resurrection impacting us here and now.

Why have centuries and generations of Christians left the comfortable walls of the sanctuary to minister to those inside prison walls? Why have centuries and generations of Christians risked notice and persecution and even arrest or worse, to pray for the poor and to work for change in this life, regardless of what we think about the afterlife? Why have centuries and generations of Christians gone out of their way to share the good news with everyone, like Paul did with Lydia?

Because: the peace that Jesus gives us; the peace which surpasses all understanding; the peace which the Holy Spirit brews within each of us and in the church as a whole: it is not an end unto itself. When we see the brokenness of the world, the poor and suffering, the prisoners and the hurts and the systems and cycles of poverty and incarceration – and we put those alongside the promised tree of life with leaves for healing, the river of life, the Lamb whose light dispels all darkness – we can't help but feel an impulse, an urge, a sense of not-rightness, a dissonance, that compels us, in freedom, to work for even a sliver of that new-city-of-God experience for everyone in this world, here and now.

As resurrection people, blessed with the peace of Christ, how can we not do anything and everything in our power, to work for peace in this world? Our peace will be incomplete until it is peace for all.

In Christ,
Pastor Ryan

Evangelism Corner

Key Aspects of Lutheran Evangelism:

Sharing the Good News:

Lutheran evangelism centers on proclaiming the Gospel, which is the message of God's love and salvation through Jesus Christ.

Focus on Faith:

Lutherans believe that salvation is a gift from God received through faith alone, not through works or rituals.

Personal Witnessing:

Sharing the Gospel with friends, family, and neighbors is a common way for Lutherans to participate in evangelism.

Community and Community Building:

Lutherans believe that the church is a community of believers, and inviting others to join this community is an important aspect of evangelism.

Service and Ministry:

Lutheran evangelism often involves serving others and demonstrating the love of Christ in practical ways.



MCEF News

The month of March at MCEF saw an increase in the number of visits to the One Stop Shop. 155 visits assisted 478 people with 210 well-filled bags of food. 71 individuals were assisted with clothing and 4 were assisted with linens.

The closets have been purged of the winter clothing. Spring and summer items are now being offered. Donations of clean seasonal clothing in good repair may be made on the first and third Sundays of the month, 2-3:30 p.m. Current needs include girls and ladies socks.

Food items needed include pasta and rice sides, canned peas, kidney beans and canned meats (chicken and tuna fish).

Thank you for sharing with your neighbors in need.

Glady Hubert

♥< ♥< ♥< PAL ♥< ♥< ♥<

PAL, the MLC (Messiah Lutheran Church) quilting group, has wrapped up our "LWR (Lutheran World Relief) Quilting Year." Sunday, May 4th's worship will include a special quilt blessing. During the service we will be dedicating and blessing 29 LWR quilts and 1 lap quilt. Three tactile/sensory quilts for the Virginia DBVI were given to Tracy DeLuca from VDBVI prior to Quilt Sunday. Last year our LWR quilts were distributed to: Angola, Georgia, Honduras, Moldova, Ukraine and also the United States. Our quilts were among the 370,818 quilts collected and distributed from the Maryland shipping warehouse.

Since PAL began in November of 2021, we have completed and donated 66 LWR quilts, 11 VADBVI quilts and 16 lap quilts for Valarie Williams, in Hospice Care, to distribute to those in need.

We continue to accept monetary donations to help buy supplies and offset the packaging/shipping costs. We meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 9am-noon at church. We try to plan a field trip on the 5th Wednesday of the month when it occurs.

Next Meetings:

May 7, May 21

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



May 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	31

May

- 1 12:00 pm Hanover Adult Center
7:00 pm Choir Practice
- 4 9:15 am All Souls Worship Service
9:15 am Messiah Christian Formation
10:45 am Messiah Lutheran Worship*
Quilt Blessing
First Sunday Fellowship
- 6 1:00 pm Banner Team
- 7 9:00 am PAL Quilt Group
- 8 12:00 pm Hanover Adult Center
7:00 pm Choir Practice
- 11 Mother's Day
9:15 am All Souls Worship Service
9:15 am Messiah Christian Formation
10:45 am Messiah Lutheran Worship*
- 14 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study
10:00 am Women's Bible Study
- 15 12:00 pm Hanover Adult Center
7:00 pm Choir Practice
- 18 9:15 am All Souls Worship Service
9:15 am Messiah Christian Formation
10:45 am Messiah Lutheran Worship*
Manna Sunday
- 20 1:00 pm Banner Team
- 21 9:00 am PAL Quilt Group
6:15 pm Messiah Church Council Meeting
- 22 12:00 pm Hanover Adult Center
7:00 pm Choir Practice
- 25 9:15 am All Souls Worship Service
9:15 am Messiah Christian Formation
10:45 am Messiah Lutheran Worship*
Mortgage Payoff/Bishop Milton
- 26 Memorial Day
- 28 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study
10:00 am Women's Bible Study
- 29 12:00 pm Hanover Adult Center
7:00 pm Choir Practice



- 12 **Jessica McKenna**
23 **Dale Umberger**
28 **Andrea Alness**



- 17 **Adam, Sr. & Bonnie Dworak**

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).

IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE!

It is with great joy and thanksgiving that we announce that we will make our final mortgage payment in May! Huzzah!

To celebrate this occasion, on Sunday, May 25th we will have a special rite of thanksgiving during worship, and a party after worship!

And we are very excited to welcome the Bishop of the Virginia Synod, Bp. Phyllis Blair Milton, to lead us in worship and join us for celebration!

So, please join us for this celebration and milestone in the life of our congregational family and ministry together!

Stay tuned to your weekly bulletins and emails for more details in the weeks to come.

Watch messiahmech.com and our Facebook page for any updates and changes to the calendar.

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



We pray for each other:

Debbie Anton; 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; **Family and Friends of 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; **Brad Shinault**, friend of the Whirleys; **Sandy Street**, sister of Donna Shaw; **Barbara Townsend**, friend of the Whirleys; **Missy Villegas**, niece of Donna & Steve Shaw; **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!