

***Messiah Lutheran Church
Mechanicsville, Virginia***



***December 28, 2025
Service of Lessons and Carols***

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

*To share the Good News of Jesus Christ
and to invite all to join us in faith, worship, and service.*

Lessons and Carols

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

8154 Atlee Road, Mechanicsville, VA 23111

Pastor: The Rev. Ryan Radtke

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Lessons & Carols

December 28, 2025

***Congregation please stand if able*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Welcome visitors! May the Spirit of Christ fill your heart as we worship today.
You are invited to make Messiah your church home.*

PRELUDE: *The First Noel* – Piano Duet, Debbie Walker and David Buetow

*GATHERING SONG: *Joy to the World* (ELW 267) vv. 1, 3-4

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is
come!

Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him
room

and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and
nature sing.

3 No more let sin and sorrow
grow

nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his
blessings flow

far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is
found.

4 He rules the world with
truth and grace
and makes the nations
prove
the glories of his
righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his
love.

*DIALOGUE

P: Jesus, the bright Morning Star, shines light in the world.

C: *By day and night he shines for all to see.*

P: Jesus was born in the midst of injustice and poverty.

C: *that the world may see the justice and richness of God.*

P: God so loved the world that God sent Jesus,

C: *so that all who believe in him may not perish but have eternal life.*

P: Jesus is the light of the world.

C: *Jesus is the light of our lives.*

P: Sing to God a new song!

C: *A song of hope, joy, and peace around the world.*

*OPENING PRAYER

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And also with you.*

P: Let us pray: Gracious God of heaven and earth, you have thrown a lifeline to us in our darkness — a beam of light that shines through Jesus. Though born in a manger, he is the firstborn of all creation. Though crucified on a cross, he is the Lord of life. Fill us with the wonder and joy of his presence in the world and in our hearts.

C: *Amen*

FIRST READING: Genesis 1:1–5, 14–18

¹ When God began to create the heavens and the earth, ² the earth was complete chaos, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³ Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. ⁴ And God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. ¹⁴ And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶ God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸ to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

FIRST CAROL: *It Came upon the Midnight Clear* (ELW 282) vv. 1-2

1 It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

2 Still through the cloven skies they
come with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heav'nly music floats
o'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hov'ring wing,
and ever o'er its babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

SECOND READING: Micah 5:2–5a

² But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.
³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.
⁴ And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth,
⁵ and he shall be the one of peace.

SECOND CAROL: *O Little Town of Bethlehem* (ELW 279) vv. 1-2

1 O little town of Bethlehem, how still we
see thee lie! Above thy deep and
dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light. The hopes and
fears of all the years are met in thee
tonight.

2 For Christ is born of Mary,
and, gathered all above while mortals
sleep, the angels keep their watch of
wondering love. O morning stars,
together proclaim the holy birth, and
praises sing to God the king, and peace
to all the earth!

***THIRD READING: Luke 1:26–35, 38**

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and

pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

***THIRD CAROL: *What Child Is This?* (ELW 296) vv. 1-2**

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping? This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing; haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!

2 Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding? Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading. Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you; hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!

CHILDREN'S TIME

FOURTH READING: Matthew 1:18–25

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³"Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." ²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

FOURTH CAROL: *Away in a Manger* (ELW 277) vv. 1 & 3

1 Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in your tender care and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

FIFTH READING: Luke 2:8–20

⁸Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to

you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, ¹⁹and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

FIFTH CAROL: *Angels, from the Realms of Glory* (ELW 275) vv. 1-2

1 Angels, from the realms of glory, wing
your flight o'er all the earth; once you
sang creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth: Come
and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.

2 Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night, God
with us is now residing, yonder shines the
infant light. Come and worship, come
and worship, worship Christ, the
newborn king.

SIXTH READING: Matthew 2:1–11

¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ²asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage.”

³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

SIXTH CAROL: Of the Father's Love Begotten (ELW 295) vv. 1 & 3

1 Of the Father's love begotten
ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega,
he the source, the ending he,
of the things that are, that have
 been,
and that future years shall see,
evermore and evermore.

3 This is he whom seers in old time
chanted of with one accord,
whom the voices of the prophets
promised in their faithful word;
now he shines, the long-expected;
let creation praise its Lord
evermore and evermore.

***SEVENTH READING: John 1:1-14**

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

***SEVENTH CAROL: Love Has Come (ELW 292) vv. 1 & 3**

1 Love has come--a light in the
darkness! Love shines forth in the
Bethlehem skies. See, all heaven has
come to proclaim it; hear how their
song of joy arises: Love! Love! Born unto
you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God
on high.

3 Love has come and never will leave
us! Love is life everlasting and free. Love
is Jesus within and among us. Love is the
peace our hearts are seeking. Love!
Love! Love is the gift of Christmas; Love!
Love! Praise to you, God on high!

DEVOTION FOR THE END OF THE YEAR

***RESPONSIVE PRAYER**

A: It is you, loving God, who lights our path with truth.

C: Your Word, Jesus, is truth.

A: In his light, draw all to the manger

C: to gather in wonder with the shepherds.

A: In his light, draw all to the manger

C: to kneel in reverence with the wise ones.

A: In his light, draw all to the manger

C: to sing for joy with the angels.

A: In the brightness of his life

C: cast away the darkness of injustice, poverty, and hunger in the world.

A: We lift before you your children that we now name either aloud or in our hearts...

A: In his light

C: Draw all to the manger

A: It is you, loving God, who meets us on our way

C: In the light of Jesus, show the world the way of life. Amen.

***PEACE**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

OFFERING

***OFFERING PRAYER**

A: Let us pray.

C: Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

***LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**C: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

***BLESSING**

P: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

C: Praise God, all creatures here below!

P: You are the shepherds telling the story.

C: We tell it in the streets and across the land.

P: You are the wise ones worshiping with thanksgiving.

C: We live with joy and go now in peace.

P: Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen

***SENDING SONG: Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (ELW 288)**

1 Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice; give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today; ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now. Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

2 Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice; now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this! He has opened heaven's door, and

we are blest forevermore. Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

3 Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice; now ye need not fear the grave; Jesus Christ was born to save! Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall. Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

***DISMISSAL**

A: Go in peace. Christ is with you!

C:Thanks be to God.










POSTLUDE: Hark, the Herald Angels Sing – Piano Duet, Debbie Walker and David Buetow

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WORSHIP ASSISTANTS – SUNDAY, December 28, 2025

Pianist: Debbie Walker
 Lay Assistants: (1st Lay Asst.) Lois Schroeder (2nd Lay Asst.) Glady Hubert
 Lector: Anita Philp
 Acolyte: Abby Schroeder
 Greeter: Marilyn Gunn
 Ushers: Bill Weaver & Gordon Gunn
 Altar Guild: Donna Combs & Marilyn Gunn
 Counters: Glady Hubert & Marilyn Gunn
 Live Streamer: Teresa Gigante

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS GIVEN BY

	Sally and Charlie Bennett		Stephanie & John Shea	
	Donna Combs		Andrea Tolbert	
	<i>In honor of 50+ Christmases at Messiah</i>		Karen Umberger	
	Brittany Cramer		Debbie Walker	
	Erna Jung		<i>In memory of loved ones</i>	

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR MESSIAH

December 28	Christian Formation	9:15 AM
	Worship Service	10:45 AM
December 30	AA	5:30 PM
January 1-2	Church Office Closed	
January 4	Christian Formation	9:15 AM
	Worship Service	10:45 AM
	First Sunday Fellowship	
January 5	Church Office Closed	
January 6	Banner Team	1:00 PM
	AA	5:30 PM
January 7	PAL	9:00 AM
January 8	Hanover Adult Center	12:00 PM
January 11	Christian Formation	9:15 AM
	Worship Service	10:45 AM
January 13	AA	5:30 PM
January 14	Women's Bible Study	10:00 AM
	Hanover Adult Center	12:00 PM
	Women's Bible Study	6:30 PM

PASTOR RYAN'S OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Ryan will be out of the office this week for his annual post-Christmas hibernation. As always, to set up an appointment with Pastor Ryan, please call or email at 507-360-7276 and/or messiahmechpr@gmail.com.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Office hours for New Year's week will be:

Mon/Tue/Wed: 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM; Thurs/Fri: Closed

Beginning January 5, office hours will be Tues-Fri Noon-5:00 PM.

WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

Numbers For the 51st Sunday of 2025:

- Average Contributions to current were \$3,446.13
- Contributions for current Dec 21st were \$5,036.74
- The YTD total contribution to current is \$175,752.83
- For comparison, current YTD 2024 was \$186,472.47
- Designated Giving for the 51st Sunday was \$455

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who recently reviewed their information for the church directory. A draft copy of the updated directory is available for review in the Narthex.

Please check your information carefully and note any additional corrections directly on the draft. All updates will be incorporated before the directory is printed.

The draft will remain available for review through Sunday, January 11.

SHARE YOUR MUSICAL GIFTS AND TALENTS

Are you a singer? Maybe you play an instrument? We'd love to hear you! Messiah's Worship Team would like to invite folks with musical gifts to share them in worship. You could sing a solo or duet...you could play during the prelude or postlude...you could join in on a hymn...or whatever else might work! Don't have time in your schedule to be a regular choir member? Consider joining choir for a special festival anthem for Easter or another special occasion. Music is a truly a gift! If you have questions or curiosities or ideas about what might work for you, please talk to Debbie!

BANNER TEAM

The Banner Team meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Next month we will meet on January 6th and 20th in the church fellowship hall at 1:00. We are making good progress on our current banner project and want to

keep going. Anyone who is interested in joining us is welcome! Please bring your own scissors because I am left handed and so are my scissors (lol).

New Year Blessings – Nancy Berg

MAKING PREPARATIONS

Our adult class during Christian formation for this season of Advent will get us up and moving and looking at our building, our congregation, and our practices through the eyes of others that sometimes find churches to be difficult places to be in. Our dearest aspiration is to truly mean it when we say “all are welcome”; these discussions will aim to prayerfully prepare such a welcome, especially where we might not even realize we have room to grow and change.

WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY

The Women's Bible Study groups meet on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month . In January we will meet on Wednesdays January 14th and 28th. We are continuing to study the women in A Lineage of Grace book. This month we are starting on Rahab reading pages 103 – 130. If you have any questions talk to Nancy Berg, Marilyn Gunn or Donna Combs.

New Year Blessings! -- Nancy Berg

MIDWINTER POWER IN THE SPIRIT

Registration is open for the Midwinter Power in the Spirit, an online gathering February 2-4, 2026. We will learn how the words of 2 Timothy 1:7, "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline," relate to the foundations of Lutheran faith. The event will feature Bible study leaders from around the Synod. Visit <https://vasynod.org/power-in-the-spirit/> for more information, registration, and an event flyer.

INSTALLATION SERVICE FOR REV. LIZ RADTKE

The Rev. Liz Radtke will be installed as pastor at Christ Lutheran Church in Richmond on Sunday, January 18th, 2026, at 4:00 pm, at Christ Lutheran. Messiah members are invited to attend. Any Messiah singers are invited to join a pop-up choir for the service. Please talk to one of the Pastors Radtke with any questions.

