

The MESSENGER



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

August 2026

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 Reformation Day or Thanksgiving or another special occasion. Music is truly a gift! If you have questions or curiosities or ideas about what might work for you, please talk to Debbie!



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The month of June saw 160 visits for food, clothing and linens at the One Stop Shop. Senior Rides provided 148 rides to seniors for doctor visits and essential services and 16 qualified for financial assistance. The pantry needs canned meats and canned tomato products such as diced, pureed or whole. The linen closet is in dire need of gently used or new towels.

Volunteers are needed in phone positions, as drivers and assisting clients at the One Stop Shop. You chose the activities that suit your schedule. Check out the website 4mcef.com for more information or talk to Pat or Gladys Hubert for details.

SAVE THE DATE: Friday, September 11, MCEF will host the 10th patriotic concert featuring the Hanover High School Strings Orchestra at 7 PM at Walnut Grove Baptist Church. Admission is a donation of \$5 and a nonperishable food item. This is a combined fund raiser for both groups. Arrive early for a good seat.

Thank you for helping those who need these services.

Gladys Hubert



The Messenger

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 8154 Atlee Road, Mechanicsville, VA
 23111

Church Office: (804) 746-7134
 FAX: (804) 746-5579

Rev. Ryan Radtke, Pastor
 Email: messiahmechpr@gmail.com

Ph: 507-360-7276

Office hours: Vary

Administrative Assistant,
 Heather Heckel
 Office email: messiahmech@gmail.com

Office hours:
 Tue-Fri 10:00 am-3:00 pm

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

Your 2026 Church Council And Associate Members

Cheryl Griffis
Cathryn O'Brien
Cory Gooch

Council President
 Vice-President
 Secretary

James Anderson
Rosalee Duke
Anita Philp

John Shea
Daren Williams

Council Liaisons

Anita Philp
Cheryl Griffis
Cathryn O'Brien
Daren Williams
Rosalee Duke
John Shea
James Anderson

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

Anita Philp
Cheryl Griffis
Becky Collie
Stephanie Shea
Debbie Walker

Christian Formation
 Evangelism
 Fellowship
 Social Ministry
 Worship

Church Council Highlights

- Council did not meet in July



Join Messiah on Facebook!



Follow us on
 Instagram

Check out Messiah's videos on



YouTube



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

PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS

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 **September 2026** edition of ***The Messenger*** is **August 26**.

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

Please send your submission by email to

Heather Heckel (messiahmech@gmail.com)



Pastor's Letter

At last month's Power in the Spirit event, our Bible study leader was the esteemed, wonderful, and wise Rev. Susan Briehl. You've sung hymns and prayed prayers using words that she crafted, whether you knew it or not. She led a Bible study over the course of two days on some of the parallels and doublets between Luke and Acts: similar stories that reinforced the messages that this two-volume set. She also led a workshop on Baptism; for this article, I'll lift up a few of the things that we learned.

First, Rev. Briehl suggested that the name of the book shouldn't be "The Acts of the Apostles; rather, it should be called "The Acts of the Holy Spirit." Everything the apostles did only happened because the Holy Spirit empowered them to do so, as promised by Jesus. Peter baptizing the Roman Cornelius and his household; Lydia setting up a house church; Saul becoming Paul; Philip baptizing Samaritans; Philip baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch...none of these would have occurred if just left up to human nature; the Holy Spirit expanded the church, spread the good news far and wide and to new and previously out-of-bounds people. The Holy Spirit worked in, with, and through the disciples-turned-apostles.

The Holy Spirit is active today, now, through each of us, in all our various vocations. What Acts is the Holy Spirit up to in you?

Second, when Philip was sent by the Holy Spirit to meet the Ethiopian eunuch on the road, and found him reading the prophet Isaiah, Philip hopped into the chariot and interpreted the Scripture to show how it pointed to Jesus Christ. And then comes the shining question: "Here is water-what is to prevent me from being baptized?" And in place of a verbal answer, Luke shows us Philip getting down in the water with the Ethiopian

eunuch and performing the baptism right there on the spot. Philip is whisked away by the Spirit to someplace new; the newly baptized individual continues on the way home, full of joy. Even though Philip doesn't say it, we know the answer to the question. Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

Who is there in your life who needs to experience the good news, in word or in deed? What is to prevent it? We still know the answer.

Lastly, during the workshop on baptism, which included any photos of baptismal fonts in worship spaces around the world and many examples of art depicting baptisms, we were shown a painting called "River" by John August Swanson. It is a long and narrow vertical painting. At the top, the sun shines; below it, we see a river flowing from the distance, winding back and forth past shores and banks of agriculture, shepherds, people collecting water, people swimming and children playing. At the very bottom of the painting, we see Jesus being baptized by John the Baptist, which the Holy Spirit, in dove-form, shining down. Rev. Briehl shared that one of the things she loves about the painting is that it shows Jesus being baptized *downstream* of all of this human activity, human life. Jesus, the Word incarnate, in addition to being baptized, is downstream of the whole of human experience. Jesus came to save, to redeem, to love, the whole of the human experience.

Which people and acts of love were your baptisms downstream of? And which parts of your life are upstream of Jesus, that make you give thanks for his solidarity?

This was my first Power in the Spirit. The keynote speaker was engaging and thought-provoking. Our Bible study reader was amazing. The fellowship and worship, the meeting of other Lutherans from around Virginia, were invaluable. We were also able to attend a fireside chat with the new Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, Yehiel Curry. And, of course, I need to mention that the food was good, too! There were breaks for rest and reflection; displays from various ministries around the Synod; workshops that shared skills and insights for our individual and congregational lives of faith (I also attended workshops about discerning how to serve

Continued, page 4

Ways you can SERVE

We need help for ALL Worship Volunteer Roles but especially:

Greeter - Arrives 15-20 minutes prior to service to open door and welcome everyone

Acolyte - Lights altar candles before service, collects wine cups during communion, extinguishes candles at end of service.

Usher - Hands out bulletins, collects offering, takes attendance, assists with the flow of communion

Counter - counts funds collected during offering after service

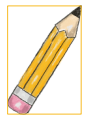
There is a sign up sheet in the narthex with all duties listed. Training will be provided. Please include your name and email on the sign up sheet or feel free to reach out to **Valerie Williams** (vswilliams2005@gmail.com or 240-638-6162) with any questions.



After 7 1/2 years, and somewhere around 3,000 posts to our Messiah Lutheran Facebook and Instagram accounts, our social media manager Donna Shaw has discerned that it's time to step down and pass the reins. She will create posts until August 31st. In the meantime, please take a moment to share thanks to God for Donna's dedication, and for all her work, and share that gratitude with her, too! And, please take some time to discern and listen to see if this is a ministry you are called to be a part of. Please talk to **Donna** or **Pastor Ryan** with any questions.



PAL



Epiphany Lutheran Church is scheduled to have an in-gathering of completed quilts in September, the group agreed to participate and send what we have finished at that time. At this time, we have completed 15 LWR quilts. There are several in different stages of completion. This opportunity, to meet at Epiphany, will provide more quilts to reach those in need sooner.

We meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 9am-noon at church. We continue to exceed our goal each year since 2021 when we began this program. It's always a blessing to us to meet, have fellowship and produce beautiful PAL (Patches and Love) quilts for LWR.

Sharing God's Love through fabric and thread is our mission.

We continue to accept monetary donations to help buy supplies and offset the packaging/shipping costs. We try to plan a field trip on the 5th Wednesday of the month when it occurs.

Next Meetings:

August 5

August 19

Pastor's Letter, Continued

God in our everyday lives and about increasing our understanding of and ministry with neurodivergent individuals). I plan to attend Power in the Spirit again. If you have attended in the past, I invite you to consider coming back, too; and you if never have, give it a try! Check out <https://vasynod.org/power-in-the-spirit/> to learn about the online winter session and next summer's in-person session.

In Christ,
Pastor Ryan



I'm looking for help in taking pictures during church and church activities, particularly when I'm not there. Picture taking is important for our archives to let future Messiah know what present and past Messiah has been doing. I have been asking people individually when I know I'm not going to be at church and if those people are still willing, I'd love their continued help. But...if you like to take pictures and you haven't been asked, please let me know! You can email me at dmshaw70@gmail.com. I appreciate all of you who have helped and those of you who may help in the future!

Many thanks, **Donna Shaw**



Mechanicsville Elementary Blessing & Clean Up

Join us on Sunday, August 23rd, at 4:00 pm, at Mechanicsville Elementary School for a pre-school year blessing and property cleanup! This is an ecumenical worship time and service project together with many of our church neighbors along Atlee Road. Let's worship, work, and pray together, and get the year off to a great start!

School Bus to Success

Our School Bus to Success is underway, and several Bus Passes have already been picked up! Thank you to everyone who has joined us in helping local foster children begin the school year prepared and encouraged.

There are still plenty of routes available in the narthex, with supply lists ranging from approximately \$5-\$30. Choose a Bus Pass that fits your budget, purchase the items listed, and return both the supplies and the pass to the collection box.

As donations come in, our youth will be adding children to the bus windows after the children's sermon, helping us see the impact of our generosity grow week by week.

The collection continues through Sunday, August 9.

Thank you for helping children in foster care start the school year with the supplies they need and the knowledge that their community is cheering them on.



BACK TO SCHOOL



August 2026						
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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					



August

- 2 9:15 am All Souls Worship Service
- 10:45 am Messiah Lutheran Worship*
- 4 5:30 pm AA
- 5 9:00 am PAL Quilt Group
- 6 12:00 pm Hanover Adult Center
- 9 9:15 am All Souls Worship Service
- 10:45 am Messiah Lutheran Worship*
- 11 5:30 pm AA
- 12 12:00 pm Hanover Adult Center
- 13 12:00 pm Hanover Adult Center
- 16 9:15 am All Souls Worship Service
- 10:45 am Messiah Lutheran Worship*
- Manna Sunday
- 18 5:30 pm AA
- 7:00 pm AA Business Meeting
- 19 9:00 am PAL Quilt Group
- 20 12:00 pm Hanover Adult Center
- 23 9:15 am All Souls Worship Service
- 10:45 am Messiah Lutheran Worship*
- 25 5:30 pm AA
- 26 12:00 pm Hanover Adult Center
- 27 12:00 pm Hanover Adult Center
- 30 9:15 am All Souls Worship Service
- 10:45 am Messiah Lutheran Worship*

- 2 **Katryn Combs**
- 4 **Nancy Berg**
- 4 **Doris Ewing**
- 4 **Bill Weaver**
- 16 **Kyle Starret**
- 29 **Jim Berg**

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).

Watch [messiahmech.com](https://www.facebook.com/MessiahMech/) 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:

Jake Addair; Sharon Addair; Debbie Anton; Ray Ash; Annette Buckholtz; Bruce Carr; Family and Friends of Johnnie Collie; Adam Dworak, Sr.; Bonnie Dworak; Angel Fernandez; Ted Ford; Jackie Garbett; Karen Jones; Roberta McMillen; Patrick Reagan; Roger Schroeder

We pray for our extended family and neighbors:

Roxie Adams, mother of Daren Williams; **Emily and Justin Aheimer**, granddaughter and grandson-in-law of Marilyn Gunn; **Patrick Cassidy and family**, friends of the Andersons; **Pastor Paul Christian**, colleague of Pastor Ryan; **Marilyn Coleman**, sister of Geoffrey Honan; **Dwayne Collie**, brother of Johnnie; **Tripp Dillard**, son-in-law of Karen Umberger; **Carolyn Drudge**, sister of Marilyn Gunn; **Judy Gage**, sister of Jean Martin; **Jameson Gilnett**, grandson of Sue; **Henry Gonzales**, friend of John and Stephanie Shea; **Rosemary Greene**, friend of Sue Gilnett; **The Griffis Family**; **Tyler Hileman**, friend of Messiah; **Charlotte Hulvey**, aunt of Sheila Whirley; **Becky Kuhn**, aunt of Liz Radtke; **Lydia & Christian**, family of Mark & Anita Philp; **Rick Meyer**, father of Tracey Anderson; **Sandy Nelson**, sister of Cheryl Griffis; **Joanne & Jerry Philp**, parents of Mark Philp; **Elizabeth Powell and family**, friends of Daren and Valerie Williams; **Ruth & Rod**, family of Mark & Anita Philp; **Tim Schroeder**, nephew of Roger Schroeder; **Addison Senters**, friend of the Andersons; **Brad Shinault**, friend of the Whirleys; **Stacie & Todd**, friends of Mark & Anita Philp; **Scott Whirley**, son of the Whirleys.

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: **Anita Philp, Roger Schroeder, 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!