

Pastor’s Column

It always amazes me how much preparation is part of living. For example, consider the preparation of the “Messenger”. I write this article on December 26<sup>th</sup>, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Day of Christmas. Lanny will edit articles & photos. Volunteers will fold and insert the “Messenger” on December 31<sup>st</sup>, the 7<sup>th</sup> Day of Christmas. Cathy will prepare “Messengers” for bulk mailing for the post office. They’ll probably arrive at our homes on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, the 9<sup>th</sup> Day of Christmas.

I think of all the preparation that went into the Advent Christmas cycle at Messiah. Tina planned the caroling, Martha planned the altar guild set up. Kathleen planned the Christmas decorations. Julie and Debra and Ed planned the music. The resulting sight and sound led us into the celebration of the incarnation.

Two preparation stories come to mind from the bible. The week of His death, Jesus’ disciples approach Him and ask, “Where will you have us prepare the Passover?” They have no idea that meal will become Jesus’ promise of forgiveness, community, and future feasting among the saints. For them, initially, this was just another religious holiday meal. For them, and for us, that meal instituted weekly feasting on Christ as Bread of Life. The other preparation story is only in John’s gospel. Pilate presents Jesus for crucifixion. He tells the crowd, “Here is your king!” The mob replies, “Away with him, crucify him!” John adds, “This happened about noon, on the Day of Preparation.” In other words, as lambs are being slaughtered for Passover meal, Jesus, Lamb of God, is presented for crucifixion.

How were your preparations for Christmas this year? Did the shopping go OK? Did the menu work out? Did the decorations look all right? Did everything get cleaned up? Did the conversations flow and laughter fill the air? We look back on our events and realize the preparation is often as joyful as the event itself. And so we begin 2019. We live that cycle of preparation / event. God is in both of them, preparation and event. And so there is grace, calling, and joy.

Pr. Michael Meranda

From The Archives

By: Cathy Carle

This picture of Pastor C. Oscar Leonardson, his wife, and their two young children, was discovered for us by Cathy Carle. We thank Cathy for discovering this “gem”.



Pastor Leonardson served Messiah from 1932 to 1938. If any of our readers know Pastor Leonardson’s wife’s name and the names of their two children, please let Lanny Anderson know in person or email him at lawander-son440@aol.com.

The Leonardson’s are on the front steps of our new Church which was dedicated on October 27, 1929.

Clothing Bank Christmas

Clothing Bank volunteers sort and store stuff all year long that is appropriate for Christmas gifts. Then just before Christmas, they bring it all out and display it in the Day-timer’s Room for their Christmas Open House. Food Pantry clients and folks from the neighborhood are invited to peruse the offerings and make selections of items that they Can use as gifts. There is no charge to the clients. And they do seem to appreciate the event.

Here some clients are seen looking over the available selections on December 12. Our sincere thanks to the Thrift Shop volunteers for their extra efforts on our behalf.



Review of Activities of Messiah

(This is part three of a handwritten history by an unknown author found in the archives by Hal Cooper)

The synod constitution was adopted. It was also decided to petition the Conference and Synod for admission to membership and to incorporate the Church according to the laws of the State of Ohio. The single envelope system for dues was adopted.

A Committee of 5 was appointed to raise \$10,000 for a Bldg Fund, to call special meeting for to call Pastor soon as a Deed had been secured on chapel?

All felt happy, on account of this birth of the new congregation despite the fact we did not have a house (The chapel was not yet our own), No money and No pastor. But right down in the bottom of our hearts we felt that God was with us and we would succeed. On Monday evening April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1921 the church council called a special meeting to call Pastor Rev. Otto O. Oleen of the Capernaum, being the candidate selected by church council. Rev. Oleen was unanimously called to be Pastor of Messiah.

The call was accepted and after serving both Capernaum and Messiah until Sept. 1921 he took charge of the new Congregation. The Capernaum congregation gave the Messiah Congregation a deed of the chapel. Now we had a house even though crowded. In April 1921 an addition was built on to the Chapel to an expense of \$342.00. I will just mention this on account of it shows how eager we were to get room for the people at our services.

We had services on Sunday. On Monday morning early 14 men started work on this addition. Worked steady all week, doing the laying of pillars, carpenter work, Elec. wiring, Painting and at 10 o’clock next Saturday eve the job was completed, so we could hold services on Sunday following. Later on the basement was enlarged.

At special meeting May 17, 1921 the committee appointed previously to look after a new site for building a new church made a report. Several sites suitable for church were reported amongst which was ours at 59 Prospect St. 84 X 247 ft owned by A O Amsden sons?. It was decided to give the committee full authority to purchase this property and it was bought for the sum of \$10,000.00.

The old house on this property was later remodeled and in Sept. 1921 Rev. Oleen with family moved in and used same for parsonage until 1925. At yearly meeting Jan. 8, 1924 a committee of 7 was appointed to raise funds for a new church. On Wednesday eve the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, 1924 a special meeting was held to decide the question of purchasing another lot on Station ave with a frontage of 50 ft. and a depth of 72 ft. It was decided to buy the property at the price \$1600.00.

(To be continued)

Annual Meeting January 27  
Right After Worship

Giving Tree Was A Success!

By: Cathy Carle

Thank you to all who gave so generously to the Messiah Giving Tree. We provided gifts to a family of five and 5 boys ages 1 thru 13 from 2 additional families. Also deserving a thank you: Kurt and Kathy Nordquest for many hours organizing this project. Candace Rodgers and Cathy Carle for decorating the tree, and Cathy, Jennifer, and Jill Carle, Sharon Knudsen, Faythe Jerome, Keith Reinker, Sue Riley, Ralph Weber, and Rhana Wehn for being involved in the delivering.

In the top picture below, we see the tree with all of the gifts neatly stacked underneath it. In the bottom picture three of the volunteers are seen preparing to deliver.



Bishop Allende Here January 13

On Sunday, January 13, 2019, Northeast Ohio Synod Bishop Abraham Allende will preach at Messiah. Coffee Hour will follow the 11:00 am Holy Communion service. Let’s plan for a nice turnout for the Bishop and a great Coffee Hour after!

Church Mouse Heard:

That during the Children’s sermon, Reverend Larry asked the boys and girls what the word “amen” means. Little Chucky’s hand shot up, “I know,” he chirped, “it means tha-tha-tha-that’s all folks!”





Letters & Emails

Dear Messiah Friends,

Once again, we thank you for coming to our home yesterday and delighting us with your Christmas Caroling. It was so nice being remembered by our Church family at Christmas time.

Clayton and Nancy Carlson

Dear Messiah Lutheran Church:

On behalf of all of us at the Samaritan House, thank you very much for your recent generous check donation of \$95.51, check number 9626, and date on check 10/31/2018. We are extremely grateful for your generosity.

With sincere appreciation,  
Steve Sargent, Executive Director

Thank you to Ed Spencer for the additional work on the air conditioner/heater in Pastor Meranda’s office. There is no longer a huge draft!

Cathy Carle

Dear Friends at Messiah,

I would like to thank you all for remembering me with the beautiful assortment of delicious Christmas cookies. They were a wonderful treat and thoroughly appreciated.

With love, Ruth Reinker

**Christmas Caroling**

About 20 people went Christmas Caroling to about six shut ins on December 16. Here part of the group is seen at Jerry Peterson’s room at Country Club Retirement Center. Carolers sang three or four carols at each visit and left a box of cookies for them to enjoy. Led by Tina Tallbacka, the group enjoyed the day and especially enjoyed the sloppy joes, pizza and cookies lunch before they “hit the road”. Our thanks to Tina for coordinating this event.



**Bishop Allende Here  
January 13**

**Carolers Arrive!**  
*By: Donna Kiddle*

Twass the week before Christmas and all on the floor  
Were wrappings and me and presents galore.  
Everything was nestled in its proper place,  
Waiting for wrappings—I can’t stand the pace!

Me in my “fat pants” and sweatshirt to match  
Had just settled in to wrap another batch.  
When out on the lawn there was such a parade  
I rushed to the window to open the shade.  
When what to my wondering eyes should appear  
But cars and people, all coming near.

More rapid than eagles, the carolers, they came.  
Tina whistled and shouted and called them by name:  
“Now Rantas, Andersons, Grimms and Kujalas,  
On Nordquests, on Faythe, on Robin, Manette and Rhana,  
too”.  
At the end of the line were a few that were new,  
So good to see them caroling and Sundays in a pew!

Tina waved her finger and the carolers, they sang.  
Throughout the neighborhood their voices rang.  
As I opened my mouth and no song came out  
I was grateful to lip sync as the carolers tunes swirled  
about.

Too soon it was over and as they went on their way,  
I’m sure I heard “Merry Christmas to all, enjoy our Lord’s  
birthday!”

**Hospitality Report**  
*By: Ruth Hlinovsky, Hospitality Chair*

The Hospitality Committee is happy to announce that we will celebrate Nation Fest on Sunday, February 24 in the Fellowship Hall, at 5:00 pm. We are still working on the entertainment for this evening.

Sign-up sheets will be provided in the love , care and concerns folders. This will help us for which nationalities and approximately how many people we should set up for.

Please bring your favorite dish or desert and your family and friends for an evening of warm fellowship and delicious food. Thanks for all your help.

Lend-A-Hand Food Pantry



Every Monday morning is a busy time for Food Pantry volunteers.

Here L to R, Becky Ollikainen and Manette Nelson man the sign in table for food pantry clients.

**Messiah Lutheran Church**  
**615 Prospect Road**  
**Ashtabula, OH 44004**



**Welcome  
Home To  
Messiah**



Non-Profit Org.  
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Permit No. 313

Messiah Messenger

January 2019

**Worship:**  
11:00 am Sunday  
**Sunday School:**  
11:00 am Sunday  
**Adult Forum:**  
9:45 am Sunday

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