

Pastor's Column

"It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas, everywhere you go." Really? What gives? I thought we were counting daffodils and April showers this time of year.

I write this "Messenger" article on March 25th. March 25th is a festival day on the liturgical calendar, the Festival of the Annunciation. Luke 1:26 tells the story. God sent Angel Gabriel to young Mary, engaged to Joseph. Gabriel told her, "The Lord is with you. Do not be afraid. You will bear a son and you will name him Jesus. Of his kingdom there will be no end." We have no idea as to the exact time and date of Jesus' birth. In the 4th Century the church decided to celebrate the birth of Jesus on December 25th. That is how the church came to celebrate the Annunciation on March 25th. Their reasoning was Jesus was a perfect baby and Mary must have had a perfect pregnancy. If gestation is nine months and if Jesus' birthday is December 25th, then the Annunciation of his birth must have been exactly nine months prior to birth, hence, March 25th. So the countdown to Christmas begins on March 25th. In that sense, the church begins its Christmas countdown much earlier than retailers!



Aside from the arbitrary decision making that goes into the church's calendar, the fact that March 25th gives us a Christmas focus is a good thing. Christmas is about incarnation. Incarnation is God becoming human in the person of Jesus. Incarnation is Christ, the second person of the trinity, taking on the human experience in Jesus of Nazareth, and walking among us. It's never too early or too late to think about incarnation. God among us is good news no matter what the season of the year. God present among us in Jesus bids us to ask how we may be more present for others.

Incarnation is only one pole of our faith. The other pole we'll celebrate a few days from now. It is the crucifixion / resurrection of Jesus. God in Christ became human for a purpose. God became one of us to show us how to be our best selves, to show us the ways of mercy, to remind us in Whose image we have been created. Perhaps THE reason God became one of us was to experience death. The gospels tell us it was necessary that Jesus go to Jerusalem and ascend to the throne of His cross. Jesus had to become the sin we generate. Sin, what separates us from God and other, was put to death that Good Friday afternoon. Because the death of Jesus was a God event, it became a life event. God is life. Resurrection followed.

May the confident March 25th proclamation of Gabriel inspire our celebration of April 19th Good Friday and April 21st Resurrection,
Pastor Michael Meranda

Shrove Tuesday Pancakes A Hit!

Pancakes, sausage links, orange juice and coffee were served on Tuesday, March 5. This was to celebrate the beginning of lent by "cleansing" the kitchen of extra fats. Men of Messiah did the cooking and about 50 people showed up to enjoy the meal and real maple syrup.

In the pictures below, left picture L to R, Dick Blood, Ralph Mongenel, Leo Caruso and Janet Caruso enjoy their meal together. In the right picture, L to R, Kurt Nordquest fries sausage in a skillet while Rick Ranta flips pancakes at the new grill on the new stove in the kitchen.

This was a new event in the life of Messiah and judging by attendance it will become an annual event.



40 Years Ago Confirmation Class

By: Cathy Carle (We appreciate Cathy finding these old photos for us)

In the picture below, the 1979 Confirmation Class is shown. First row L to R, Michelle Nappi, Joyce Crawford, Kim Mullen, Jill Hewins and Eric Rennick. Back row L to R, Pastor Wayne Sherman, Monroe Nelson, Karen Williams, Robert Fortune, Michael Hasen and Kris Kent.



Review of Activities of Messiah

(This is the final part of a six part series on the "History" of Messiah by an unknown author found in the archives by Hal Cooper)

Since Rev. Leonardson took charge of this congregation the attendances at our church services has been very good but much better showing could be made if all our members would attend. We could fill the church to full capacity at every service if such was the case. The depression has handicapped us financially on account of so many of our members out of work, but with God's help we have been able to meet most of our obligations and if we have faith in God and do our duty or whatever we are able to do, God will bless us and we cannot fail.

God has blessed us wonderfully under the past 12 years. You can rest assured He will do it the coming years if we are faithful.

At last I have compiled a little statement what our S.S. & Societies has helped us with under the past 12 years financially

• Tabita	\$11,732.15
• Betsy Ross	2,945.07
• Loyal Workers	5,926.23
• Linc. Broth.	4,788.81
• L. League	4,966.69
• J. League	987.92
• Jr. Miss. Band	706.32
• S. School	5,029.88
Total	\$37,083.07

May therefor every member of Messiah be true to their church that we may, 12 years from now, have doubled our membership and all our debts paid up.

Author Unknown

Qualified Charitable Distribution

By: Lanny Anderson, for Finance Committee

Retirees reading this Messenger are reminded that if they are 70.5 years of age or older and have a required minimum distribution (RMD) from an IRA, it may qualify as a Charitable Distribution if it is given to the Church. Talk with your accountant or tax advisor for more details. I have two small IRA's and recently switched them to a QCD as a potential income tax savings.

Easter Garden Plants

Members are reminded that Easter Garden Plants should be brought to the Church on Saturday, April 20 between the hours of 10:00 am and 1:00 pm.

Enclosed is a sign up sheet for donors to complete. Names of donors and persons memorialized will be printed in a bulletin insert on Easter Sunday.

Letters & Emails

Messiah Lutheran Church Family,

Thank you for all of your prayers and kindness throughout this difficult time. Thank you for your time and effort of making Bruce's funeral reception perfect. Our family is so very thankful to be part of Messiah Lutheran Church.

From the family of Bruce C. Anderson

Love,
Debbie, Pam and Amy

Soup Supper Lenten Series

Attendance at the Wednesday evening soup supper Lenten Series has been good! About 20 to 30 people attend each week. In the picture below attendees are seen going thru the supper line.

Each week the menu includes soup made by one or two different people, bread and dessert made by members. These soup supper events will continue until Easter. The last one scheduled is on April 10. Following supper we view a DVD selected by Pastor.



Easter Breakfast Help

Byu: Ruth Hlinovsky, Hospitality Chair

Easter Sunday is on April 21st and as always, we will have Easter breakfast together in the Fellowship Hall, between the hours of 9:30 and 10:30 am.

Traditionally, the members of our congregation bring in breakfast items. Hospitality will be in the kitchen to keep the dishes hot or cold as required.

Help is needed for serving and clean up on Sunday, as well as a few volunteers on Saturday, April 20 at 10:00 am to set up the hall. Please let me know if and how you can help.

Thank you, as always.

Easter Schedule

Date	Event	Time
April 13	Clean the Church Day	10:00 am
April 14	Palm Sunday	11:00 am
April 18	Maundy Thursday	7:00 pm
April 19	Good Friday	7:00 pm
April 20	Easter Breakfast Set Up	10:00 am
April 21	Easter Breakfast	9:30 to 10:30 am
April 21	Easter Service	11:00 am

Sunday School Is Growing!

Thanks to the work and dedication of Shyanna and Emelia Lindberg our Sunday School is growing! Shown in the picture below are five children who were in class on a recent Sunday.

Shyanna is shown here at the end of the table. Clockwise from Shyanna's left the students are ; Abby, Meadow, Carly, Owen and Alex.



Church Mouse Heard:

There is no greater treasure than a good friend!



Easter Sunday
April 21
Holy Communion
11:00 am
Featuring Easter Garden

Messiah Lutheran Church
615 Prospect Road
Ashtabula, OH 44004

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Ashtabula, Ohio 44004
Permit No. 313

Messiah Messenger

April 2019

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



Welcome
Home To
Messiah



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