

Pastor's Column

A Revelation Christmas

Throughout the Bible, authors will often use popular genres of the day or put a twist on familiar tales. The familiar parts give the reader shortcuts into the story and make differences more obvious. Imagine the story of Little Red Riding Hood as a superhero movie with dramatic music impressive acrobatics, but when Red arrives at Grandmother's house, she finds the wolf curled up next to the fire after Grandmother has fed him a homecooked meal. For this 'Dragon Christmas' the story you need to know is the birth of Apollo. Apollo and his twin sister Artemis were children of the Greek god Zeus and a Titan, Leto. Hera, Zeus's wife, was furious and forbade the land to provide a place for Leto to give birth. She also sent the fierce serpent/dragon Python to hunt down Leto. Eventually, Leto is swept away to a floating island where she is able to give birth to Artemis and Apollo. Soon after, Apollo takes his revenge by hunting down and killing Python.

I invite you to read Revelation 12:1-6, 13-17 to see how this story is changed for the followers of Christ at the time. So, what is noteworthy about this story? The dragon in this story is a force of pure evil and destruction not a pawn in a divine marital dispute. The child is being targeted because of the power he will have. When the child is born, he goes to be with God in heaven. There is something about this child beyond our understanding something divine, yet also human. In some traditions, Apollo shoots Python with an arrow while his mother runs away with him in her arms. Apollo seeks revenge immediately to show his strength and honor, but the child has no need for revenge because God does not keep track of wins and losses the way humans do. Strength is not measured by the destruction of others and value is inherent.

In verses 7-12 there is a battle in heaven in which the angels defeat the dragon, and he is banished to earth. When the dragon starts to hunt the woman again, God steps in to bring her to a new sanctuary. Even the land itself helps to protect the woman when the dragon tries to send a flood after her. In the Greek tale, Hera makes sure that the land refuses to allow Leto to find rest. Zeus blows Leto out to sea where she finds a barren, floating island too flimsy to call land, and gives birth alone. The God of Abraham has dominion over all of creation, not just one of many. God also continues to protect the woman and provides for her each time the dragon threatens her.

Apollo was one of the most highly respected gods, he was considered a god of prophecy, healing, protection of herds, and music, among other things. In a time when the story of Jesus might not be the safest or the easiest thing to share, you can see why early Christians may have chosen the template of Apollo's birth to teach about the Christ child. May we listen with open hearts to hear the story of Christ, even through the roaring of dragons.

Merry Christmas!

Rev Sarah Moore



Let's Meet Our New Secretary

The Mutual Ministry Committee selected, Church Council approved, and Brandi Neff started work for Messiah. Brandi most recently worked for Ringer Printing in Kingsville. She was an embroidery machine operator.

Brandi is engaged to Jesse Lott. They have two daughters Violet six years old and Piper two. Brandi lives in Conneaut.

She found out about our position from her grandparents Norma and Gary Eble.

Brandi's hobbies are gardening, art, and music.

Welcome Brandi! We look forward to working with you.



Church Mouse Heard:

Pastor, George and wife Sally brought their new bundle of joy home to the parsonage. Days went by with Sally watching every move baby Georgie made while George Sr. busied himself with heavy global and theological thoughts. Naturally the care began to take its toll on Sally, causing her husband to gallantly announce:



I know you're having a lot of trouble with Georgie, dear, but keep in mind, the hand that rocks the cradle is the same hand that rules the world.

To which Sally replied, "how about taking over the world for a few hours while I go shopping."

Christmas Eve Services will be at 4:00 pm and 11:00 pm

Outreach/Stewardship Report

It is time to resupply our Feminine Hygiene closet. We donate to Homesafe, Samaritan House, Catholic Charities, Lakeside Junior High School, and Dragon Empowerment Center. To name a few.

Tampons and liners are the most popular supplies. Place in the bin outside Pastor's office.

The next project will be in anticipation of winter weather. Look for sales on gloves, socks, wash cloths and toothbrushes/toothpaste.

December Altar Flowers

Dec 7— 1st vase—Joanne Duva in memory of Walt and Rachel Piekarski
2nd vase— Joanne Duva in memory of Jack Piekarski and Trudy Boone

Dec 21— 1st vase—Gary And Norma Eble in memory of loved ones (parents)
2nd vase— Rebecca Robison in memory of Joseph Robison love and miss you

Dec 28— 1st vase— Herb Watts in memory of Norma Watts
2nd vase—Herb Watts in memory of Bruce Watts

December Vigil Candle

Becky Banfield in memory of Joe and Mary Greenawalt



Part of the crowd at last summers VBS. Thanks to the leadership of ShyAnna Lindberg, was another very successful VBS.

**January Messenger
Copy Deadline
December 30, 12 Noon**

Coffee Cans Needed
Altar Guild has requested coffee cans for taking altar flowers home after Church. Place them in the Church office, please.

Trunk & Treat Successful

Trunk and Treat held in late November was a huge success. About 10 members decorated their cars and showed up to pass out candy to children attending. In the picture below members are visiting the refreshment table.



In the picture below the Fleming Family and their dog are enjoying the festivities.



Part of the crowd at Trunk & Treat.



Another Tasty Thanksgiving Dinner

Thanksgiving dinner held on November 23 was again a huge success!

In the top picture the serving line is shown.

In the middle picture a part of the crowd is seen enjoying their meal.

And in the bottom picture members are seen going through the serving line. About 80 members and their guests enjoyed the meal. Our thanks to Kathy Nordquest and her committee members for providing this favorite event for us.



Messiah Lutheran Church
615 West Prospect Road
Ashtabula, OH 44004

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

December 2025

Worship:
Sunday 10:00 am

Sunday School
Sunday 10:00 am



*Welcome
Home To
Messiah*



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