

Pastor's Page

Longitudinal lines encircle our planet. They run North-South. Latitudinal lines run East-West. Together, longitude and latitude form a geographic grid. That means we may locate any place on earth with exactness. Messiah Lutheran Church, for example, is at the intersection of Longitude 80.78 and Latitude 41.86.



It was a no brainer for cartographers to draw Latitude lines on a map. They started with the equator then drew lines to the North Pole and lines to the South Pole. This divides earth into southern and northern hemispheres. But numbering longitude lines was a little more arbitrary. Longitude lines start with what is known as the Prime Meridian. This is the line that runs north-south thru Greenwich, England. An International Commission decided this in 1884. The commission could have chosen Budapest or Poughkeepsie, NY. Greenwich got to be the Prime Meridian because England was a leader in industrialization, navigation, and exploration. The Prime Meridian divides the planet into east and west hemispheres. So, Ashtabula is in the Western Hemisphere but Cambridge, England (because it is a few yards east of the Prime Meridian) is in the Eastern Hemisphere. The Prime Meridian and latitude lines enable us to know precisely where we are in any given moment. This has made possible travel, exploration, time zones, and public safety. It is important that we live geographically oriented.

Think of your other points of reference. There are other markers by which you know who you are and where you are going. You are someone's daughter or son. You may be a care giver for someone. Your primary care physician is Dr. _____. Your attorney is Mr. _____. You live on a particular street with a particular set of neighbors. You are a graduate of a specific school. You work at a specific place. You have been with your bank for _____ years. You shop for groceries at _____. You tend to purchase a particular brand of car. You are assigned a specific polling place to cast your vote. You are an Ohioan. You live _____ amount of miles from Messiah.

God is certainly our reference point. (My vicarage supervisor, Dr. Niedner, once joked, "The only geography we have to keep straight is Heaven is Up and Hell is Down.") We are baptized. So we know God is our source and God is our destiny. We receive Holy Communion. So we know any Sunday the bread and wine on Messiah's altar bring the body and blood of Christ to us kneeling at the chancel rail. We hear the Word. So we know there is ample bread of life to feed us all our days. We speak and hear forgiveness. So we know where there is forgiveness there is life and salvation. Knowing the One to Whom we belong, we go forth with courage and bring peace to whatever latitude / longitude coordinates we occupy.

Faithfully your pastor,
Michael Meranda @ Latitude 41.86 / Longitude 80.78

The View From the Back Row



The church choir rehearses after the Ash Wednesday service. During the season of Lent choir practices on Wednesdays rather than their usual Thursday evening.

Appreciative Inquiry Scheduled

Please attend this important event at Messiah.

Saturday, March 25th @ 10:00 a.m., we gather in the Fellowship Hall.

Pastor Dave Anderson will lead us thru an Appreciative Inquiry process.

This will enable our congregation to envisioning priorities that will grow our mission and ministry. Our event will conclude by 12:00 noon on March 25th.

Thank you,
Pr. Meranda

HEALTH FAIR THANK YOU



We would like to thank the many Messiah members that worked so hard to help to make the first Messiah Health Fair a success.

"Thank you" to Pastor Meranda for you vision and leadership. "Thank you" to the Men of Messiah - David Anderson, Lanny Anderson, Bryan Goebel, Russ Jepson, Carl Malkie, Kurt Nordquest, and Rick Ranta for all of their hard work in the kitchen that fed so many. "Thank you" to Cathy Carle, Faythe Jerome, Manette Nelson, Kathy Nordquest, Tina Tallbacka and all who donated such delicious cookies. "Thank you" to Jan Anderson, Joyce Anderson, and Sue Leitert for opening and staffing the Thrift Shop for those in need. "Thank you" to Robin Wells for providing optical screenings. "Thank you" to Mark Anderson, Randy Lewis, Emelia Lindberg, Shyanna Lindberg, Martha Pallutch, and Ed Spencer for helping people to find their way as well helping to set up. "Thank you" to Olga Cardenas for serving as the interpreter. "Thank you", as well, to all who donated to the food for the luncheon. Everyone helped in so many ways. We apologize if we omitted anyone. We appreciate all who volunteered and supported this project. We have received a great deal of positive feedback. We, and the organizations involved are looking forward to next year!

Sincerely,
Barb Lewis
Renee



Church Mouse Says...
"We don't change the message,
the message changes us."

Messiah Mailbag

We received a couple of Thank You cards from the Mya Women's Center which the Congregation is assisting.



Dear Congregation,

Thank you so much for all the beautiful baby supplies that you purchased for Mya Women's Center! Our moms and babies will appreciate them!

Blessings,
Judy Christen

Dear Pastor Meranda and Congregation,

Thank you for your recent donation as well as all of your support for Mya! With your help 4 babies will be entering the world, very wanted!

Blessings,
Judy Christen

SCANDINAVIAN FRUIT SOUP

Tina Tallbacka

Ingredients:

7 or 8 oz. package of mixed dried fruit. (apricots, plums, peaches, apples)
3 tablespoons tapioca (add a little more if you want it thicker as it cooks.)
1/2 cup of sugar, or more to tastes.
3 cinnamon sticks

Dice the fruit into small pieces. Combine all in a 2 or 3 quart saucepan. Add 6 or 7 cups of water.

Simmer for 2 hours.



CHURCH CANDIDS



Free haircuts were a hit at the Health Fair.



Men of Messiah helped serve food at the Health Fair.



The Health Fair was a great success! Busy, busy, busy!

Mary and Ed Schroeder and their grandson, Nathan Schroeder, enjoy a recent coffee hour after church.



Good food and fellowship was featured at NationFest.



Selections from Godspell was the entertainment after recent the NationFest Dinner.



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"We're Open Sundays"
11:00 A.M.—Worship
9:45—Adult Forum

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An ELCA Congregation
in mission to Ashtabula