



# MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

## MESSENGER

Volume 25, Issue 10

### Special Points of Interest

Worship Committee meeting  
time change to 12:30 pm for  
October and November

Women's Event-October 12  
2:00-5:00 pm

Day Camp-October 13  
9:00 am-4:00 pm

OWLS-October 14 12:00 noon

Family Christmas Tree Craft  
Day-October 18, 2:00-4:00 pm

Bishop Papson Installation  
October 19, 3:30 pm

Veterans Miracle Network  
Drive-October 19–November 9

Confirmation: October 26 at  
the Gathering Service

Thanksgiving Dinner and Prayer  
Service–November 1, 6:00 pm

Fall Congregational Meeting  
Sunday, November 2,  
12:00 noon

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### Women's Event

**Sunday, October 12**  
**2:00-5:00 pm**  
**Fellowship Hall**

We are hosting an event for women with vendors, self-defense demonstrator, yoga, speakers and much more.

### Day Camp Columbus (Indigenous) Day

**Monday, October 13**  
**9:00 am-4:00 pm**

We are holding a day camp on the days when children are out of school but parents have to be at work. The purpose of the camp is to help parents with children and to establish and continue relationships with families in our community.

Please contact the Church office for more information about the camp and application. Camp spots will be available on a first come first, serve basis.

### OWLS

**Tuesday, October 14**  
**12:00 noon**

Bring your own lunch. We will play Bingo! Cards and chips will be provided.

### Family Christmas Tree

**Saturday, October 18**  
**2:00-4:00 pm**

We have decided to have a "Family Christmas Tree" this year! We would like every member to have an ornament on the tree.

We are holding a ornament making party in which you can make an ornament with your name and year on it. Don't want to be crafty, you can purchase an ornament and put your name and year on it.

All ornaments are due at church by November 23.

### Bishop's Installation

**Sunday, October 19**  
**3:30 pm Good Hope**  
**Lutheran in Oil City**

The Erie Lutheran Conference Buses will leave **Faith Lutheran** (5414 E. Lake Rd) at **1:00 pm** and **Luther Memorial** (225 W. 10<sup>th</sup>) at **1:30 pm. Cost is \$5.00 per person**, payable on departure.

There are still spaces available. To reserve your seat, sign up on the sheet in the narthex or email [faithlepastor@gmail.com](mailto:faithlepastor@gmail.com).

### Watch Party

Can't make it to Oil City? We will be hosting a watch party of the installation of Bishop Papson in Fellowship Hall at 3:30 pm.

### Veterans Miracle Network Drive

**Sunday, October 19 to**  
**Sunday, November 9**

We will be collecting personal care items and monetary donations.

### Confirmation

**October 26** at the  
Gathering Service

Elijah Carner, Isabella Alaniz, Joshua Bartlett, Joshua (JJ) Conner

### Thanksgiving Dinner & Prayer Service

**Saturday, November 1**  
**6:00 pm**

Please sign up on the poster in the Narthex or contact the Church Office by October 26 if you plan to attend and indicate what food item you will be providing for the dinner.

**Please remember to bring your prepared food item to the dinner.**

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**Follow Messiah Lutheran  
Church on Facebook**

Live Stream Sunday YouTube-  
Messiah Lutheran Church Erie

### Church Office Hours

**Monday**

Closed

**Tuesday**

10:00am-5:00pm

**Wednesday**

Closed

**Thursday**

10:00am-5:00pm

**Friday**

10:00am-5:00pm

## From the Desk of Pr. Tom

### **The Gospel According to Autumn**

There's a certain magic in the way autumn sneaks up on us. One day it's still summer, the grass thick and green, the air warm and heavy. Then suddenly, without asking permission, the trees turn into stained glass windows lit by the afternoon sun. Reds, golds, oranges, and purples glow as though God Himself dipped His paintbrush into every color on the palette.

We know what comes next, of course. The colors will fade. The branches will empty. Winter is on the way, but here's the miracle: autumn never mourns. It blazes. It glows. It teaches us that endings can be just as beautiful as beginnings.

Martin Luther once wrote, *"Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime."* Autumn has its own sermon to preach. If spring shouts, "Life begins again!", then autumn whispers, "Yes, but you can let go in grace." Aging and dying are not accidents in God's design; they are woven into creation itself, part of the rhythm of life that bends toward resurrection.

Of course, it doesn't always feel graceful. Walter Matthau, with his signature grumble, once said, *"Old age is like a plane flying through a storm. Once you're aboard, there's nothing you can do."* That's the thing about aging - it's not optional. The turbulence comes whether we're ready or not, but the Christian faith adds the essential detail Matthau leaves out: we are not the pilot. Christ is. The One who steers us through the storm has already conquered death, and He promises a safe landing.

The truth is, aging brings both laughter and lament. Wrinkles arrive, joints creak, memories slip away. Yet, as Stephen Sondheim wrote in *Follies*, *"Good times and bum times, I've seen them all, and, my dear, I'm still here."* That line, sung with both humor and grit, reminds us that survival itself can be a kind of victory. To live long is to carry both scars and stories - and in Christ, every story, no matter how scarred, is redeemed.

Even the philosopher Immanuel Kant, not exactly known for sentimental musings, once observed, *"From the crooked timber of*

*humanity, no straight thing was ever made."* In other words, none of us grows old flawlessly. We stumble, we bend, we grow unevenly; and yet, God can make even crooked timber into something useful or beautiful. Autumn trees are not perfect either with some leaves blotchy and some branches twisted. In the sunlight, however, they shine.

So, what do we learn from the season of fall? We learn that life has stages, and each one is holy. Spring is for growing, summer for thriving, autumn for harvesting and winter for resting. We learn that aging is not something to fear but something to receive with courage and even humor. Most of all, we learn that death is not the last word. Autumn gives way to winter, but winter cannot hold forever. Easter always breaks through.

So this autumn season, don't just see the leaves - see God's reminder written in every branch and breeze: life is a gift, aging is a grace, and death is a threshold to resurrection.

**In Christ,  
Pastor Tom**

### Fall Congregational Meeting

**Sunday, November 2**

Lunch at 12:00 noon, Meeting at 12:30 pm in Fellowship Hall

## The Secret Garden of the Soul: Grief, Renewal, and Resurrection

While I was growing up, my favorite book to read was Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*.

This book is more than a beloved children's novel; it is a story filled with spiritual echoes, pointing us toward the hope we have in Christ. At its heart, it's about grief, restoration, and the miracle of new life breaking through where we thought only death could remain.

The story begins with loss. After Colin Craven's mother dies tragically, his father, Archibald, cannot bear to face her memory. The garden she loved most becomes a symbol of his pain, and so he locks it away, hiding it from sight. For years, no one enters. It grows wild, shut off, forgotten. This is what grief can do to us, too. When sorrow is too great, we sometimes close off the very places in our hearts where life once bloomed.

Then comes Mary Lennox. At first, she is no heroine - she is sullen, spoiled, and lonely. Yet when she discovers the hidden garden and begins to work in its soil, something remarkable happens: the garden's renewal begins to work renewal in her. As the weeds are cleared and the flowers return, Mary herself softens, grows, and opens to love.

She does not keep the garden to herself. She invites Colin, the boy who has lived in shadow and sickness, to step into the sunlight of this secret place. Colin, thought to be crippled and destined for misery, discovers strength in his body and joy in his spirit. As he tends the soil, he too is restored. Finally, even Archibald, the grieving father, finds healing when he sees what love and patience have accomplished. The garden that once stood as a monument to loss becomes a sanctuary of life.

This is not just good storytelling; it is Gospel truth. Jesus tells us in John 12:24, *"Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."* Death, grief, and endings are real, but they are not the end. God brings life out of death. Just as the locked garden could bloom again, so too our lives can be opened by God's grace.

Martin Luther once said that the cross of Christ is like "a tree of life for those who cling to it." Through Christ, our griefs and our losses are not meaningless; they are transformed. We cling to a Savior who knows sorrow, who was himself shut away in the tomb, and who walked out of that garden alive.

Isn't it striking that the resurrection itself happened in a garden? Mary Magdalene mistook the risen Christ for the gardener (John 20:15). In truth, she was not so wrong. Christ is indeed the gardener of our souls, tending the soil of our lives, pruning what is dead, and planting the seeds of eternal hope.

Immanuel Kant once said, *"Out of the crooked timber of humanity, no straight thing was ever made."* We are all a little crooked, broken, and overgrown. In the hands of the divine gardener, however even what is tangled can bear fruit, and what seems lost can bloom again.

So when you think of *The Secret Garden*, remember it is more than a children's tale. It is a reminder of what God is doing in us. He takes what has been locked away by grief, and has grown wild and lifeless, and breathes renewal into us. In Christ, our secret gardens are never abandoned. They are tended with love until one day they shine with resurrection's glory!

**If you have haven't read *The Secret Garden*, go borrow it NOW! Pastor has a copy you can borrow, you can read it for free online, or it is available at the public library.**

### Fall 2025 Sermon Series LUTHERANS - IT'S MORE THAN JUST COFFEE AND BACK PEWS

**10/5/2025 "Telling the Truth Twice" (Law and Gospel)**

Deuteronomy 30:15-20;  
Luke 4:14-21

**10/12/2025 "You Didn't Choose Me, I Chose You!" (Election)**

Genesis 12:1-3;  
John 15:13-16

**October 19 Bishop Miller preaching the lectionary**

**10/26/2025 "Church is Messy and Holy" (The Church and the Christian Life)**

1 Corinthians 12:12-27;  
Mark 10:35-45

# THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHANCEL AND SANCTUARY

Chancel and sanctuary are both important areas within a church, but they serve different purposes. The chancel is typically located at the front of the church and is where the clergy and choir members perform during services. It often contains the altar, pulpit, and lectern. The sanctuary, on the other hand, is a sacred space within the church where the altar is located and where the Eucharist is celebrated. It is considered the holiest part of the church and is often separated from the rest of the church by a screen or railing. While the chancel is more focused on the performance of the service, the sanctuary is dedicated to the worship and reverence of God.

## DESIGN AND LAYOUT

The chancel is often raised above the nave of the church, providing a clear view of the altar for the congregation. It may be separated from the nave by a screen or rail, known as a chancel screen or chancel rail. In contrast, the sanctuary is typically located at the front of the church, directly behind the altar. It may be enclosed by a railing or balustrade, known as a sanctuary rail, to separate it from the rest of the church.

## DECORATIONS AND FURNISHINGS

The chancel is often decorated with religious symbols, artwork, and furnishings such as a pulpit, lectern, and choir stalls. It may also contain a tabernacle, where the consecrated Eucharist is kept. In comparison, the sanctuary is adorned with altar cloths, candles, and other items used during Mass, such as chalices, patens, and ciboria. The sanctuary may also contain a crucifix, statues of saints, and a tabernacle.

## FUNCTIONS AND USES

The chancel is used by clergy and choir members during religious services, such as the Eucharist, weddings, and funerals. It is a place for prayer, reflection, and worship. On the other hand, the sanctuary is primarily used for the celebration of the Mass and other sacraments, such as baptism and confirmation. It is the focal point of the church and the most sacred area where the consecration of the Eucharist takes place.

## SYMBOLISM AND SIGNIFICANCE

The chancel symbolizes the presence of God and the connection between heaven and

earth. It is a place of reverence and devotion, where the faithful gather to participate in the liturgy. In contrast, the sanctuary represents the dwelling place of God and the holiest part of the church. It is where the sacrifice of the Mass is offered and where the faithful receive the body and blood of Christ.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the chancel and sanctuary are both important areas within a church that serve distinct purposes during religious ceremonies. While the chancel is a sacred space reserved for clergy and choir members, the sanctuary is the holiest part of the church where the Mass and other sacraments are celebrated. Both areas are adorned with religious symbols and furnishings that enhance the worship experience for the faithful. Ultimately, the chancel and sanctuary play vital roles in the spiritual life of the church and its congregation.

| Attribute  | Chancel                           | Sanctuary                        |
|------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Location   | Part of the church near the altar | Area around the altar            |
| Usage      | Reserved for clergy and choir     | Reserved for sacred rituals      |
| Decoration | Often elaborately decorated       | May contain religious symbols    |
| Size       | Can vary in size                  | Usually smaller than the chancel |



***Our Mission:****Glorifying God through our worship, our witness, our service, and our support****Our Vision:****To build and strengthen the body of Christ***Unofficial Council Highlights**

- Review minutes from the September meeting;
- Approved Julie, Mike and Christopher Boam into the congregation as new members!
- Holding a watch party in Fellowship Hall on October 19th at 3:00 pm for those who would like to watch Bishop Papson's installation but are unable to attend in person;
- The fundraising goal to pay for the mural in the community garden was met! A special thank you to all those who helped out during the spaghetti dinner and all of those who attended;
- Sharron Orlando has resigned from Altar Guild. We thank her for all of her work that she's done with us;
- The date for Trunk-or-Treat is October 23, we will be gathering on October 9th at 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall to fill bags with treats for this event;
- Briana will be taking pictures for the updated church directory on October 5th and 19th;
- On October 19th, the CYFM & Worship Committee is holding a crafts day for families to create personalized Christmas ornaments for a family style Christmas tree this year;
- The church council voted to accept Elijah Carner, Isabella Alaniz, Joshua Bartlett, and Joshua (JJ) Conner as adult members of the congregation upon their upcoming confirmation on October 26 in the Gathering Service. There will be a reception held after to celebrate;
- There will be a Women's Event on October 12th from 2:00 - 5:00 pm;
- The Pet Walk will take place on September 30th at 6:00 pm;.
- The Lifetime Recognition Banquet will be taking place this year. Church council is discussing the idea of having it take place every five years instead of annually;
- Next meeting will be October 16 at 6:00 pm in the Conference Room

**VISION IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE**

We continue to make the vision which the congregation adopted a reality.

- The TVs are installed, and we are getting them ready to use.
- The children's ministry is coming into shape with the Children, Youth and Family Ministry Teams.
- The School Day-Off Day Camp is still on course for the very first time on Indigenous/Columbus Day in October.

There are other aspects of our vision, but those are not expected to be implemented until next calendar year. Therefore, we do not have updates yet.

We ask that you continue to keep our congregation in your prayers as we explore new and exciting ways to do ministry in our ever-changing, fluid, dynamic world.

**Presentation by Steven Kehl**

**Monday, October 6, 6:00 pm  
at Faith Lutheran Church,  
5414 E. Lake Rd**

Steven is a local licensed Medicare agent who for years has been

**MEDICARE 101**

helping folks in our community understand their Medicare options. His goal is to make things simple, clear, and maybe even a little enjoyable.

The presentation will cover the basics of social security and Medicare, with plenty of time for questions. This educational community event, sponsored by Faith's Social Ministry committee, is free and open to the public.

**Committee Meetings****Altar Guild**

Bible Study Every Wed.  
Oct.-April 6:30 pm

Bound 1st Wed.  
Together 1:00 pm  
Sept.-May

CYFM 1st Thu.  
12:00 noon

**Church Life**

Grateful Every Thu.  
Prayer 10:00 am CC

Guided Every Mon.  
Meditation 6:30 pm

Property 2nd Sun.  
9:45 am

Sewing Circle Every Tue.  
10:00 am

Servant 1st Sun.  
Outreach 9:45 am

Stewardship / 3rd Thu.  
Finance 5:30 pm

Worship 1st Wed.  
11:00 am

**Church Council Leadership**

Art Anderson-President

Robin Curtis-Vice-President

Briana Alaniz

Cyndi Allen

Laurie Hecht

Tim Smock

Blaine Waters-Secretary

Vacancy



*Find out  
what is going on  
in the ELCA:*

Church-wide - [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)

NWPA Synod -  
[www.northwesternpasynod  
elca.org](http://www.northwesternpasynod.elca.org)

**MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH PRELIMINARY 3-YEAR VISION**

Approved- 2025 to 2027

**WORSHIP****Technology**

Add Screens in sanctuary (DONE)  
Update website (On-Going)  
Obtain Hearing Assisted Devices (DONE)

**Music Ministry**

Build out the Band (2025)

**CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY**

Bubble Church (2025-2026)  
School Day Off Camp (2025)  
Milestone Ministry (Sept. 2025)

**PROPERTY**

Fix Front Electronic Sign (DONE)  
Repair/Purchase Boiler (DONE)  
Plumbing Upgrades/Restrooms (2027)  
Buy New Freezer (DONE)

**IN-REACH**

Recruit and Train More Volunteers (2025)  
Training for in-home communion ministry (2025)

**EDUCATION**

Bible Study (Adult and Children) - have more options (2025-2027)

**OUTREACH**

Maintain Community Garden (On-Going)  
Continue Back to School Bash (2025-2027)  
Continue participation in Community National Night Out (2025-2027)

**FELLOWSHIP**

Explore more group events (On-Going)  
Continue to grow OWLs ministry (spiritually and fellowship) (On-Going)  
Lutheran Walkers (2025)

## Ongoing Ministries

- Altar Guild open to training new members
- Bethany Outreach - collected men's and boys' clothing. Special need for underwear.
- Blankets for Babies - Through the Soldiers and Sailors Home we were asked if we could sew, knit, or crochet baby blankets 18x22 that will be part of a kit given to families in the National Guard.
- CYFM - Children, Youth, Family Ministries - Bible Studies, youth activities, milestones
- Church Life - plans fellowship activities. Open to new members to help
- Counter Ministry - open to training new members
- Guided Meditation - prayer ministry group
- Prayer Chain - email or call the office for prayer requests
- Prayer Shawl - available for all occasions; baptisms, baby shower/birth, weddings, illness, hospitalization, men, women, or children who need to feel God's love wrapped around them. Contact the office to pick one up.
- Property - takes care of the building and landscaping
- Servant Outreach - Outreach activities locally and globally
- Sewing Circle - sews blankets for various organizations including Lutheran World Relief, National Guard, Linus Project
- Stewardship/Finance - takes care of our financial well being
- Sound Booth Technician needed for both services - training available
- Worship Assistant/Lector blank availability schedule posted through the 15th of the month
- Worship Committee - plans worship services

## 2ND MILE GIVING APPEAL

Recipient for **October** is:

### **THE HIGHMARK CARING PLACE**

You may contribute through your regular envelope, marking how much to designate to 2nd Mile on the "other" line on your envelope, or by sending a separate donation.

Through **September 23 \$78.00** has been donated for **Bethesda Trinity Center**

Thank you for your generosity!

### **Want to know more about our 2nd Mile Giving organizations?**

The death of a loved one is devastating to a child. The impact can be overwhelming and the children and family often need support. The Highmark Caring Place can provide that support through its various programs.

Thousands of community members are helped by the Caring Place each year at no cost through our peer support programs, and our education, consultation, and referral services.

## Wesleyville Food Pantry Volunteer Opportunities

October 7 at 5:00-6:00pm for Country Fair distribution.

October 13 at 10:00am to unload senior boxes.

October 20 at 10:00am to unload food delivery.

October 21 at 10:00-11:00am & 5:00-6:00pm for regular food distribution.

## Community Blood Bank Blood Drive

Thank you to those who have donated in the past. As you may know, you can donate every 56 days, so we have scheduled our next drive for **November 10-15** so that you can stay on schedule.

Needless to say, the Blood Bank is always in need of new donors!

For anyone who wishes to donate but doesn't have a ride, please call the church office and let them know when you would like to go.

If you would be willing to drive someone and wait for them to donate, please call the church office and let them know your availability.

If you have any questions, please contact Jean Parker at 814-528-5817.

## Bound Together Book Review

### **1st Wednesday at 1:00 pm**

**October** - The Diamond Eye by Katie Quinn (Jean)

**November** - All the Broken Places by John Boyne (Candy)

**December** - Remarkable Creatures by Tracy Chevalier (Madalyn)

**January** - The Book of Lost Names by Kristen Harmel (Mary)

**February** - Women in War by David Yuzuk (Cyndi)

**March** - The Glassblower by Peter Benning (Bonnie M.)

**April** - The Berry Pickers by Amanda Peters (Sandy)

**May** - To be determined

**Altar Flowers**

\$30.00 for one, \$55.00 for two

**October 5**

- 1.
- 2.

**October 12**

- 1.
- 2.

**October 19**

- 1.
- 2.

**October 26**

- 1.
- 2.

**Bulletins**

\$7.00 each

**October 5**

- 8:30: Jones
- 11:00:

**October 12**

- 8:30: Jones
- 11:00:

**October 19**

- 8:30: Jones
- 11:00: Candy Sprouse

**October 26**

- 8:30: Jones
- 11:00: Mary Rush

**Vigil Candles**

\$3.00 a week

**October 5**

Jones

**October 12**

Jones

**October 19**

Jones

**October 26**

Jones

*Welcome New Members*

We welcome Mike, Julie, & Christopher Boam who joined as associate members on September 21.

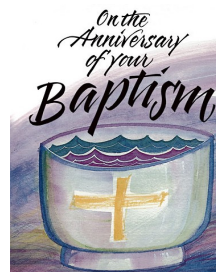
*Thank you!*

Thank you to everyone who supported the Spaghetti Fundraiser for the Wesleyville Community Garden Mural.

Sean & Heather Bartlett and Marylou Bartlett for the donation of the TV screens and equipment.

Thank you to Art Anderson, Rich Alaniz, Sean Bartlett, Pastor Tom, and Brian Rogala, Jr. for all the work that went into wiring, mounting, and hanging the screens.





- |                  |                     |   |
|------------------|---------------------|---|
| 2 Savanna Conner | 14 Dave Frick       | "Through baptism you have been received into the household of God, entrusted with the good news of Jesus Christ, and strengthened to serve by the holy and life-giving Spirit." |
| Eva Edwards      | 17 Kayla Bresee     |   |
| 5 Ernie Wolf     | 21 Kristine Edwards | 9 Winifred Gardner Jennifer Bliss   |
| Nevaeh Peters    | 24 Rich Alaniz      | 10 Cyndi Allen 26 Candy Sprouse   |
| 10 Tammy Johnson | 28 John Needham     | 17 Kay-Leigh Conner 30 Blaine Waters  |
| 12 Tim Smock     |                     | 20 Al Schell 31 Ray Bennett   |



"Bless them so that all may see in their lives together within the community of your people a vision of your kingdom on earth."

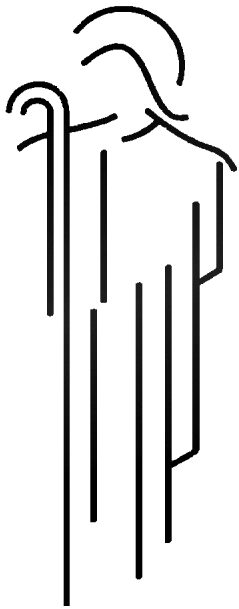
- |                               |                               |                           |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Day 1: 1 John 4:4           | • Day 17: Psalm 34:4          | 5 Al & Pat Schell         |
| • Day 2: Romans 8:37          | • Day 18: Hebrews 2:14-15     | 6 Brad & Lori Bresee      |
| • Day 3: James 4:7            | • Day 19: Psalm 18:32         | 8 Mark & Pam Van Horn     |
| • Day 4: Ephesians 6:10-11    | • Day 20: 1 Peter 5:8-9       | 10 Steve & Linda Porada   |
| • Day 5: 2 Timothy 1:7        | • Day 21: Psalm 118:6         | 22 Art & Cindy Anderson   |
| • Day 6: Psalm 23:4           | • Day 22: 2 Thessalonians 3:3 | 24 Marilyn & Steve Rizzo  |
| • Day 7: 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 | • Day 23: Psalm 56:3-4        | 28 Marie & Michael Harman |
| • Day 8: Revelation 12:11     | • Day 24: 1 John 5:4          |                           |
| • Day 9: Luke 10:19           | • Day 25: Isaiah 54:17        |                           |
| • Day 10: Isaiah 41:10        | • Day 26: Romans 16:20        |                           |
| • Day 11: 1 Corinthians 15:57 | • Day 27: Psalm 34:7          |                           |
| • Day 12: Psalm 27:1          | • Day 28: 1 John 3:8          |                           |
| • Day 13: John 16:33          | • Day 29: Revelation 20:10    |                           |
| • Day 14: Psalm 91:4          | • Day 30: John 8:12           |                           |
| • Day 15: Colossians 2:15     | • Day 31: 1 Peter 1:13        |                           |
| • Day 16: 2 Corinthians 2:14  |                               |                           |

If we missed your Birth, Baptism, or Marriage Anniversary we apologize.

Please contact the church office to provide us with that information.

"God never said that the journey would be easy, but He did say that the arrival would be worthwhile." — Max Lucado





MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

2025 Eastern Avenue

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Volume 25, Issue 10

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

*MESSENGER*



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