

I will *praise*
the name
of *God*
with a song, and will
magnify him
with
thanksgiving.

Psalm 69:30, NKJV

November 2023 Messiah Messenger

**Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church
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**Rev. Nils Niemeier – Pastor
Rev. Stephen Unger - Associate Pastor
Thom Brownworth - Deacon**

PASTOR NIEMEIER'S NOTE:

Dear Saints at Messiah,

It's autumn, and as I write this, we're in what folks call "the spooky season." Halloween has just passed, and we're beginning the month with All Saints' Day, but we've had the imagery of Halloween around us for weeks—no, *months*—in the lead-up; that mix of ghosts and ghouls and skeletons that pops up in our stores and neighborhoods every year at this time. Some of our neighbors might leave up their decorations well past Halloween—in fact, there's one house on Upper Sheep Pasture on the way to the church that has a skeleton on their doorstep year-round (the homeowners like to dress it up with seasonal hats). But we see this every year at this time as we descend deeper into autumn and closer to winter: the images of death appear to celebrate that particular "night in the lonesome October."

Autumn seems to lend itself naturally to images of death and decay. The trees are entering their winter dormancy, and their leaves are changing to bright golds and reds before they fall. The nights are getting colder and the sun is setting earlier. For farmers, it's the time of harvest—ripe vegetables and grains must be picked and reaped before they, too, begin to rot and die. The world starts to prepare for winter's long sleep. And perhaps that stirs something within us to think about mortality and death. Maybe that's why we have fun with skeletons and ghosts at Halloween. Death seems less scary when we mock it with its own imagery. But nonetheless, as the seasons change and winter's vanguard approaches, mortality does seem more palpable.

I often wonder if this is why the Church in the West placed the observance of All Saints' Day (All Hallows) on November 1, because as the world temporarily dies for winter, we are presented with the great reminder of the Church Triumphant and Christ's promise to all who trust in him: that all who believe in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. To be a saint doesn't mean that one must have performed miracles or have lived a life free from sin or have been somehow granted that status by the church—rather, all people who trust in Jesus are saints. A saint is *holy* because of Christ who makes them holy. That means that all who trust in Christ are saints, living and dead, you and me included. And Christ's holy ones will live again—indeed, though they are dead to us, they are *not* dead, but still alive with him, for "he is not a God of the dead, but of the living" (Matthew 22:32). So on All Saints, we remember all those who have died in Christ and remember that the death and decay we see around us and the deaths that took them from us are

only temporary. Just as spring follows winter, so will eternal life follow temporal death. Just as the leaves that fall from the trees bud out again when the sun's warmth returns, so will the blessed dead emerge from the grave at Christ's second coming and enjoy the great love and protection of Christ forever:

“They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore;
the sun shall not strike them,
nor any scorching heat.

For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of living water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” (Revelation 7:16-17)

So this autumn, if you find yourself walking through one of our historic churchyards, looking at one of those ancient, New England Puritan headstones faced with a winged skull, that reminder of mortality, remember the hope the person buried in that grave held for the Resurrection, for it is your hope and my hope, and the hope of all the saints. In the end, even death will die. But the saints in Christ will live forever!



On a separate note, I want to give thanks for the service of Pastor Steven and Linda Unger at Messiah in light of Pastor Unger's announcement in October that he and Linda would be leaving Messiah to go on to new things in the coming weeks. Pastor Unger saw Messiah through her vacancy and the beginning of the pandemic, and I know we are all grateful for his service then and his continued service these past three years. I am personally grateful for his friendship and contributions to the ministry at Messiah since I arrived here. And I want to thank Linda for her friendship and all that she has brought to our congregation, especially her service on the Boards of Fellowship and Evangelism, her help in connecting us with Stony Brook University, and her Women's Bible Study, which has been a great success. I am sad to see them go.

Pastor Steve, Linda: you go with my prayers, well-wishes, love, and deep thanks. You have the prayers, well-wishes, love, and deep thanks of the congregation as well, and I know they will join me in expressing it. Thank you!

In His grip,

Pastor Nils Niemeier

Blessing of the Animals 2023



Our Blessing of the Animals Service was held on Sun., Oct. 8th.
19 animals were present and received a wonderful blessing!



Thank you so much!!!

Thank you to all who donated items for the **coat drive** and to all those who helped sort them. The items were greatly appreciated! We helped hand them out on Monday, October 16th with the Lighthouse Mission food pantry location in Ronkonkoma. We collected 100 coats, 130 pairs of socks, 23 gloves, 19 hats, 32 scarves and 3 purses.



Thank You

To the wonderful Saints at Messiah Lutheran Church,

Words cannot fully capture the gratitude that we feel toward you for the lovely welcome you have given Grace and for the many, many gifts you have given us as we begin our marriage. We also want to thank the members of the Fellowship Committee who made the party on Sunday the 15th possible. Thank you to everyone who prepared or brought food and who decorated the Fellowship Hall. We had a wonderful time and felt so very, very loved by you all, Grace especially!

Thank you very much, and God bless you!

Pastor Nils and Grace Niemeier



Pastor Nils and Grace with Pastor John Mueller



Pastor Nils and Grace with parents, Paul and Myra Niemeier

Photos: Jonathan Connolly

**Welcome Reception
for Pastor Nils and Grace Niemeier
October 15, 2023**

We would like to thank all those who came out for the **Meet & Greet** to help Grace feel welcomed to our church family. Messiah's church family is such a blessing! Thank you also to all who helped make it a special day.





Birthdays

1 - Allie Harrison, **2** - Jacob Susinno,
Violet Saul **3** - Jason Flynn,
6 - Lisa Snyder, **7** - Amelia Siar,
8 - Adam Bell, **10** - Jeff Smith,
11 - Holly Krajeski, Joan Erickson, Margaret Haffner,
12 - George Harsch, Alexa Calvanese, Vincent Susinno,
Derek Clarke, Melania Clarke, **13** - Kate Smith,
14 - Robert Anderson, **16** - Rev. Steve Unger,
17 - James Gruenfelder, Brad McArthur, **18** - Melanie Buttaro,
Ann Ezelius, **20** - Emma Murphy, **23** - Emilia Retzlaff,
24 - Austin Polly, Ellen Edwards, **25** - Kristen Hass,
29 - Hannah Detwiler, **30** - Patricia Davidson.



Service Schedule

Our Sunday service schedule at Messiah will see two services each Sunday, the early service at **8:30** and the late service at **11:00**. The 8:30 service will be more of a blended/family service, while the 11:00 will more strictly follow the liturgy as printed in the hymnal.

Sunday school for both children and adults will take place between the services at 9:45.

**Daylight Savings Time ends Sunday, November 5th.
-don't forget to turn your clocks back 1 hour!**



Join us for our **Annual Congregational Meeting** on Sunday, Dec 3 at **11:00 am** following the 9:30 am service.
Please note: there is only 1 service that Sunday at 9:30 am.

Parish Education:

Sunday School



Sunday School is offered between services at 9:45 for both Adults and Children.
We look forward to seeing you there!



We are looking for Sunday School teachers and substitutes. It's a wonderful opportunity to help our children learn about our faith. If interested, please speak with
Liann Dennis or Pastor Niemeier.



Midweek Bible Study

The Midweek Bible study is held on **Wednesdays at 5:30 pm**. A Wednesday morning Bible study time will be announced soon.

We will be doing a study on the Church using Christa Petzold's *Gathered by Christ: The Overlooked Gift of Church*.

This will be available through the church office. If you would like to take part, please contact the church office,

Pastor Niemeier, or sign up on the church website.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Women's Bible Study



Women's Bible study is held on **Thursdays at 7pm**. We will be reading Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Four Habits for Faithful Living by Christina Hergenrader. Books are available through the church office.

All are welcome, even if Bible study is new to you. Please contact the church office (info@messiahny.com) to sign up.

Confirmation Class

Classes are held on **Tuesdays at 5:30 pm** for students in 7th and 8th grades.

How you can Help at Messiah

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



There are many ways to serve
here at Messiah!

Using your gifts and talents to help support Messiah
Lutheran Church can
be a truly rewarding experience in
so many ways.

At this time, we ask all who attend our church to consider volunteering to serve. We have various ministry and service opportunities that need your help.

Please consider the following:

Service Helpers

- Lectors - serve on a rotating basis, reading the scripture lessons at Sunday service.
- Acolytes – assist on the altar during service. A good opportunity to earn service hours!
- Ushers – assist before and after service, guiding and directing church attendees.
- Live Stream – providing computer assistance for those members who are not able to attend in person.
- Power Point – set up and run slides during service.

Trustees – help with maintaining our building, with various projects,

Altar Guild – setting up for Communion and cleaning up afterward, changing the Altar candles, decorating the Sanctuary and Narthex at Christmas and Easter, etc.

Weekly Coffee Service - purchasing snacks, milk, and coffee, making sure we have enough coffee cups and sugar.

Yard work – please see article to follow.

Board of Evangelism – help with outreach to our community

Please see the **Sign Up Sheet** in the Narthex or contact the church office for more information. Thank you!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



FALL CLEANUP

Saturday, Nov. 18th at 10 am

We need your help in caring for our church property. Bring your rakes, blowers, trimmers, etc.

Many hands make light work!

The Lutheran Women's Mission League
needs your help!



Please join us **Friday,
November 10th at 3 pm.**

Come and help us assemble school kits and
baby items for
Lutheran World Relief.

Items needed are:

70 page Spiral Notebooks; Rulers; Erasers; Baby Sweaters; Baby Tee Shirts (6 – 24 months); Bars of Ivory or Dove soap.

Thank you, as always for your kind generosity!

Altar Guild



Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 1:00 pm in the Council Room.

Please consider joining the Altar Guild!

Please see the Sign Up Sheet in the Narthex or contact the church office for more details.

+ Soli Deo Gloria +
Ruth Hawkins for the Altar Guild

NOVEMBER EVENTS!



Thanksgiving Feast

It is time to gather together to share the Lord's blessings.

Our Thanksgiving Feast/New Member Sunday will be held on Sunday, November 19th at 12:30pm.

We will have one service that day at 11am followed by the feast.

Sunday School will be held at 9:30am. Sign up to bring your favorite Thanksgiving dish to "gobble up".

Please contact the church office if you have any dietary concerns.



Join us for
Thanksgiving Worship
on Wednesday, Nov 22nd at 7:00 PM



Basket Raffle!

It's that time of the year again for our annual basket raffle fundraiser! Let's make this even bigger and better than last year and have your baskets in by Nov. 5th. Some examples of basket themes: Movie Night, Family Game Night, Pasta Night, Craft Day for the Kids, Tea Party and whatever else you can think of. Please be sure to attach a list of the items in the basket.

Tickets will be sold November 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th. Winners will be picked on December 3rd. Please speak to Nancy McCabe with any questions.

Empty baskets are available in the narthex if you need one!



Altar Flowers

If anyone wishes to have flowers at the altar, we ask for \$50 for two bouquets, or \$90 for one arrangement, to be displayed on the designated Sunday. You would be able to take those bouquets home after the late service. Please note: a flower donation envelope must be submitted with your payment, including information to be in the announcements. Thank you!



Do you have a loved one away at school or in the military?

Living away from home can be a lonely experience. Please allow us the opportunity to reach out to your student/service member with words of encouragement, spiritual resources, and care packages. We can even help to find local churches in their community, so that they can continue in fellowship with other believers and maintain a strong foundation in the Christian faith.

Please contact the church office for details.

Would you like to come to church, but are in need of transportation?

Please contact the church office at (631) 751-1775.

We may be able to arrange a ride for you!

Are you in need of prayer or would like to speak to a pastor?

Please contact the church office at (631) 751-1775.

Office hours are Monday – Friday 9:00 am – 1:00 pm.

Or, you can email us at info@messiahny.com.



The Altar Guild will once again decorate the Narthex and other areas of the church with poinsettias during the Christmas season. We will obtain the poinsettia plants from the florist so they will be all nearly the same size. Anyone who wishes to purchase a poinsettia plant in memory of a loved one or in celebration of an event may do so. We will publish the names of the donator and the loved one in an insert during the Christmas Season. Those who purchase a plant may take it home after service on December 25th. The price of each plant will be \$12. **Please place your orders by SUNDAY DECEMBER 3rd.**

Thanks for your participation and help with our Christmas decorating ~ we appreciate your help and your love. In His Service ~ The Altar Guild

Order form for Christmas Poinsettia Plants \$12 each

Name: _____

Number of Plants _____

In loving memory of: _____

In joyful celebration of: _____

I will pick up my plant after church on Dec 25th _____

I wish to have my plant for distribution to shut-ins and residents of Nursing homes _____

Amount enclosed _____

Please place order form in Offering Plate or in Church office.

**Would you like to give a gift in honor or memory of a loved one?
Use the form below, and include it with your donation.**

*Memorial
Messiah Lutheran Church
465 Pond Path
East Setauket, NY 11733*

Enclosed is a contribution of \$ _____

For:

Church Memorial Fund _____

Church Building Fund _____

Other _____

In loving memory of:

In joyful celebration of:

In honor of:

(Names as they appear in our Memorial Book)

Name of Donor: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____ *Envelope No.* _____

Please send acknowledgement to:

*Please fill in all information above and place this form with your check
payable to: Messiah Lutheran Church in an envelope marked: **Memorial***

Coming Soon:

ANGEL GIVING TREE



Our Angel Giving Tree will be going up before the Thanksgiving Feast. For those who do not know, we ask our congregation to take an Angel off the tree, buy the item written on the back and bring it to the church unwrapped. Place it under the tree. These items will be going to families in the local community.

Midweek Advent Worship

We are working on planning an activity and soup dinner for each of our mid-week Advent services, December 6th, 13th & 20th. Soup and activity at 6pm and the service at 7pm. Bring the whole family to join in the fun & fellowship!

Join us Wednesday, November 29th at 6pm to make an advent wreath and enjoy some pizza. Please sign up so we can make sure we have enough supplies.



The holidays will soon be upon us!

Would you consider donating some time to help in the church office?

We will have holiday bulletins, holiday postcards, as well as our usual bulletins and newsletter to sort, fold, and mail.

If you are interested, please contact the church office at 631-751-1775 or email info@messiahny.com.

Any help will be greatly appreciated.

It's also a nice way to get together with your Messiah church family, working together, sharing fellowship, and having coffee and cake!

Thank you in advance for any help you can give!

Find Us on Social Media!



On the Messiah Facebook page, you will find information about church services, COVID-19 updates, as well as devotionals and meditations.



And don't forget to subscribe to Messiah **YouTube** page! Here you'll find archived videos of streamed services, messages from the pastors, devotionals and other video resources.

Follow our pages today! You can find links to both our Facebook and YouTube pages on our website, www.messiahny.com.

SCAN ME



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FaithStreet provides you with the ability to make your pledges/offerings online to support Messiah's various programs and ministries. FaithStreet allows you to give one-time, weekly, monthly or twice per month securely via your bank account, credit card, or debit card (just like you pay your utility bills). You can make your offerings online or via text. This will help the church keep a consistent flow of funds throughout the year. To give via FaithStreet, scan the QR code above or go to our website, www.messiahny.com. In the upper right-hand corner click on **MORE**, click on **ONLINE GIVING/DONATION** and it will take you to the link for Faithstreet.com to set up your on-line giving account with Messiah.



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