



MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

*The Lutheran Church-
Missouri Synod*

1308 Whitley Rd.
Keller, TX 76248

**Sunday School &
Adult Bible Class**
9:30am

Sunday Worship
8:00am, 10:45am

CHURCH OFFICE
(817) 431-2345

Rev. Thomas Chryst
Senior Pastor

Rev. Brennick Christiansen
Assistant Pastor

CLASSICAL ACADEMY
(817) 431-5486

www.messiahkeller.org

www.mlcatexas.org

*"The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.'"*

(Matthew 3:3)



Painting: *St. John the Baptist Preaching in the Wilderness*, by Santi di Tito, 1588

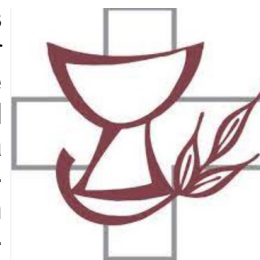
FOR OUR VISITORS....



Welcome! We encourage you to follow along with either the printed service, or with the hymnal. The page numbers for the hymnal are posted at the front of the sanctuary and on the next page. We realize it can take a while for newcomers to become familiar with our liturgy, so please feel free to ask someone near you for assistance—he or she would be happy to help.

We love children in our church! But if your little one gets fussy you may use the **cry room** that is located at the north end of the hallway behind the sanctuary on your right. You are able to see and hear the worship service from there. We also have **"Quiet Bags"** available for children to use during the service. Please ask an usher or elder if you need assistance. The Quiet Bags are returned after the service.

The Lord's Supper is celebrated in our services today. In this supper, our Lord Jesus Christ graciously feeds the humble sinner with His true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. Scripture clearly teaches that anyone who eats and drinks the body and blood of Christ without discerning that body and blood receives a judgment rather than a blessing from God (1 Cor. 11:29). Therefore, out of a Christian concern for souls, we require a thorough instruction in the teachings of the Lutheran Church before participating in this Sacrament. Participation at the altar is also a testimony of unity of faith with all others who partake (1 Cor. 10:17). Since unity at the altar presupposes unity in doctrine and confession (Acts 2:42), we kindly request that **only those who are in confessional fellowship** with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod participate. This includes active members in good standing of all sister Missouri-Synod congregations.



We recognize that **Closed Communion** is a sensitive issue for many and have a brochure to explain it more thoroughly. It is available in the narthex or from an usher. If you have any questions or concerns, you are welcome to speak with our pastor. However, **we welcome** both children and adults who are not communicant members of the Lutheran Church to come to the altar during communion for a pastoral blessing. Please indicate the request for a blessing by crossing your arms over your chest.



Follow the QR code to visit our **"Virtual Guestbook"** and tell us about yourself and your visit with us.

Divine Service—Setting One—LSB 151

Hymns:

341, 344, 347

Hymns During Distribution:

359, 407, 342

Sermon Title:

"Stumps and Shoots"

Scripture:

Isaiah 11:1-10

Prelude:

MILWAUKEE ("Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates")

-settings by Jim Vyhanek and Albert Beck

PUER NOBIS ("On Jordan's Bank the Baptists' Cry")

-settings by Thomas Gieschen and Michael D. Costello

Postlude:

FREU DICH SEHR ("Comfort, Comfort Ye My People") – Ralph C. Schultz

By the Preaching of Repentance, We Are Prepared for the Coming of the Lord

"John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 'Repent'" (Matt. 3:1–2). His preaching of repentance for the forgiveness of sins prepared people for the coming of Christ into the world. St. John's work was historically complete with the incarnate advent of Jesus, but his vital ministry continues in preaching Law and Gospel. The Son of God has come in the flesh, "a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots" (Is. 11:1), and continues to bear the fruits of righteousness. His good tree of the cross is "a signal for the peoples" (Is. 11:10), by which He calls the nations to repentance. "With the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips" (Is. 11:4), He slays the wicked and brings the dead to life, making sons of Abraham out of lifeless stones. So also the "root of Jesse" comes to us, "even he who arises to rule the Gentiles" (Rom. 15:12), that "we might have hope" and be filled "with all joy and peace in believing" (Rom. 15:4, 13).

Serving in God's House Today

Organist: Miguel Ruiz

Altar Guild: *All Altar Guild members serve in the month of December.*

Counters: Laurie Ward
Cathy Keto

8:00 a.m.

Head Elder: Randy Burk

Head Usher: Randy Burk

Acolytes: Jaxon Kirby
Joseph Kirby
Cory O'Dell

**Crucifer/
Altar
Assistant**

10:45 a.m.

Luis Munoz

Marty Hobson

Jacob Lemmon
Matthias Loeffler
Nathan Munoz

The flowers that adorn the altar this morning are given to the glory of God by Roland and Christine Towers in honor of Brandon and Nicolas Towers' birthday.

Introit *Psalm 105:4–8; antiphon: Isaiah 40:3b*



*In the wilderness prepare the way | of the LORD;**
make straight in the desert a highway | for our God.
Oh give thanks to the LORD; call up- | on his name;*
make known his deeds among the | peoples!
Sing to him, sing prais- | es to him;*
tell of all his | wondrous works!
Glory in his | holy name;*
let the hearts of those who seek the | LORD rejoice!
Seek the LORD | and his strength;*
seek his presence con- | tinually!

Remember the wondrous works that | he has done,*
his miracles, and the judgments he | uttered,
O offspring of Abraham, his | servant,*
children of Jacob, his | chosen ones!
He is the | LORD our God;*
his judgments are in | all the earth.
He remembers his covenant for- | ever,*
the word that he commanded, for a thou- sand gener- | ations.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.
*In the wilderness prepare the way | of the LORD;**
make straight in the desert a highway | for our God.

Collect of the Day

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Gradual

Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt.

Sung by Cantor
Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.
Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation.
Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
From the house of the Lord we bless you.

THANK YOU!

To all who purchased gifts for the Angel Tree children this year, because of your generosity we were able to provide gifts to **65 children** from **27 families!**



THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

TODAY 12/07 - 8:00AM - DIVINE SERVICE—STREAMING LIVE
- 9:30AM - SUNDAY SCHOOL—STREAMING LIVE
- 10:45AM - DIVINE SERVICE

MONDAY 12/08

TUESDAY 12/09 - 9:30AM - JOY GROUP
- 7:00PM - CONFIRMATION 3

WEDNESDAY 12/10 - 6:00PM-- ADVENT MEAL—BAKED POTATO BAR, PROVIDED BY THE CHRYST FAMILY
- 7:00PM - ADVENT EVENING PRAYER SERVICE

THURSDAY 12/11 - 6:00PM - SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

FRIDAY 12/12

SATURDAY 12/13 - 8:30AM - SWADDLING CLOTHES
3:00PM - MLCA CHRISTMAS PROGRAM (K-8TH GRADE)

CATECHESIS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 7-13

Scripture: John 1:14

**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,
and we have seen his glory,**

What benefits does Baptism give?

**It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death
and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all
who believe this, as the words and promises of
God declare.**

Which are these promises of God?

Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Mark:
Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but
whoever does not believe will be condemned. Mark
16:16

READINGS

Mon: Gabriel Appears to Zachariah - Luke 1:5-25

Tue: The Annunciation - Luke 1:26-38

Wed: Christ's Birth Is Foretold to Joseph - Matthew
1:18-25

Thu: The Visitation - Luke 1:39-56

Fri: Isaiah 35:1-10 (OT Reading)

Sat: Matthew 11:2-15 (NT Reading)

HYMNS

344 1, 2, 4 "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"

357 1, 3, 5, 7 "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

345 1, 3, 5 "Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding"

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: December 7-20

7: Is. 24:1-13
1 John 1:1 – 2:14
8: Is. 24:14 – 25:12
Obad. 1-21
1 John 2:15-29
9: Is. 26:1-19
1 John 3:1-24
10: Is. 26:20 – 27:13
1 John 4:1-21

11 : Is. 28:14-29
1 John 5:1-21
2 *John 1-13*
3 *John 1-15*
12: Is. 29:1-14
Jude 1-25
13: Is. 29:15 – 30:14
Rev. 1:1-20

14: Is. 30:15-26
Rev. 2:1-19
15: Is. 30:27 – 31:9
Rev. 3:1-22
16: Is. 32:1-20
Rev. 4:1-11
17: Is. 33:1-24
Rev. 5:1-14

18: Is. 34:1-2, 8 – 35:10
Micah 1:1 – 7:20
Rev. 6:1-17
19: Is. 40:1-17
Rev. 7:1-17
20: Is. 40:18 – 41:10
Rev. 8:1-13



ADVENT MIDWEEK SERIES 2025

"The Saints are Coming"
Advent Meal at 6:00 pm
Evening Prayer at 7:00 pm

The theme for this year's Advent midweek services will be "The Saints are Coming".
We will consider Christ coming and making holy His Church in the lives of...

St. Andrew, the first of our Lord's twelve disciples,
apostle and brother of Simon Peter.

St. Thomas the twin,
apostle and confessor of our need to apprehend Jesus in the body.

St. Lucia, martyr and confessor,
known for confessing the true Light amidst the darkness of sin.

We'll begin our Wednesday evenings together with a meal at 6:00pm in the Fellowship Hall, followed by The Office of Evening Prayer at 7:00 in the Sanctuary.

Week 1 ~ December 3rd: "St. Andrew"
Ezekiel 3:16-21; Romans 10:8b-18; John 1:35-51
<https://allthehousehold.com/st-andrew/>
(Meal: Tacos, provided by MLCA Parents)

Week 2 ~ December 10th: "St. Lucia"
Genesis 2:15-25; 2 Corinthians 10:17-11:2; Matthew 13: 44-52
<https://allthehousehold.com/st-lucia/>
(Meal: Baked Potato Bar, provided by The Chryst Family)

Week 3 ~ December 17th: "St. Thomas"
Judges 6:36-40; 1 John 1:1-10; John 20:19-31
<https://allthehousehold.com/st-thomas/>
(Meal: Soup & Salad, provided by MLC Youth Group)

Christ the savior is born.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” – Luke 2:11 ESV

Merry Christmas and God’s Blessing to all who call Him their Savior. At the close of the year while looking back at the blessings God continually gives us with the ability to overcome fear and trust in His protection and provision, it is good to remember and give thanks for those who bless us in His name. Many various ideas may come to mind when this is mentioned, with the gift of family and friends to varying levels. However, one of the steady blessings we have as a church family is each other, especially the generous staff who consistently gives us their time and talents. Whether it be preaching, speaking, teaching, serving, witnessing, or making music, the church and school staff at Messiah and MLCA have shown us the meaning of serving in the way our Lord would ask us to.

The Board of Elders recognizes this and asks that if it be in your heart to do so, show your appreciation with us by contributing to a Christmas gift fund that will be shared amongst the church staff. Any amount that you feel appropriate will be welcomed and warmly accepted with thanks. If intending to contribute via cash or check, please place it in a sealed envelope marked “Staff Gift” and put it in the offering plate or give it directly to an Elder to ensure it is received and recorded correctly. If contributing via the electronic tithing website, the appropriate tag will be available. The gifts will be presented to the staff after the Candlelight Service on Christmas Eve by the Elder group on behalf of the congregation.

Please remember that this is a gift of goodwill, not obligation. It is a blessing for us to have wonderful individuals leading us through meaningful and Spirit-filled services and activities. We only ask that if you have the means and desire to do so, to provide a material gift to the group of people we are blessed to call our church leadership and team.

In closing, we would like to wish all of you a Merry Christmas with the happiness and comfort that comes with God’s love.

In His name and with the blessing of Christmas to all of you,

2025 Board of Elders



POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

On Christmas Eve the chancel area will be decorated with beautiful red poinsettias, donated by congregation members. We need 60 plants for our poinsettia “trees” plus additional plants for the chancel area. **This year the cost is \$12.00 per plant.** Poinsettias are donated for the primary purpose of adorning the sanctuary, but donors are welcome to take their plants home following the 10:00am service on Christmas Day.

Please make checks payable to Messiah Lutheran Church, marked “Poinsettias.” Place payment and this completed form in **the O’Dell Mailbox** or in the basket on the mailbox counter **by December 31st.**

Name (printed as you would like in the bulletin (the _____ Family, for example):

Number of Plants: _____

Check Amount: _____ (\$12.00 ea)

Make plans to join us for Christmas Services

December 24th

5:00pm ~ Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols

7:30pm ~ Evening Prayer

December 25th

Divine Service ~ 10:00am



Please keep in your prayers...

**Vicky Krolczyk, recovering from surgery;
Janet Hazelhurst, recovering from surgery.**

We continue to pray for our members and loved ones battling cancer: Tim Speight, Rob Bentley, Randy Gay, Denny Knutson, Joan Beach, Linda Pancake, Rick Swender, Wayne Kirkland, Ken Blume, Carolyn Blume, Gaelina Strader, Sarah Jarrett, Mike Vandergriff, Rev. Ernie Bernet, Janie Peter, David Grissom.

...also those with other illnesses and trials: Jaana Phillips, Dennis Nietenhoefer, Lisa Preston, Matt Hinde, Lee Masoian, Alli Burk, Amy Lyon, the Lewis family, Bruce Lage, Jaden Chisholm, Chelsea Lage, Grant Smith, William Johnstone, Marlene Eaton, Kris Carter, Wes Liles, Mary Lowry, Patsy Smith, Shelby Renfro, Connie Worley Ramsey, Brooke Lage, The Lowry Family, Sandy McDougal, Jacob Brewer.

...and those who are unable to worship with us regularly: Carolyn Blume, Susan Copen, Don & Marilyn Curry, Rudi Milbitz, LaVina Goedecke, Janet Hazelhurst, Ron and Barbara Busse, Ron Klingbeil, Ronald and Brenda Patterson, Marvin Wilken.

.....all of our college students in and out of state: Ashley Brewer, Jacob Brewer, Colby Carter, Seminarian David Christensen, Maranda Crutchfield, Dorian Crutchfield, Paul Hedman, Ethan Johnson, Cole O'Dell, Ryan O'Dell, Clara O'Neil, Daniella Osorio, Helena Phillips, Aidan Richmond, Davis Richmond, Mia Salgado, Max Tonniges, Charlie Umayam, Audrey Weber, Emily Weber, Morgan Chryst, Matthew Palmer.

We remember all those serving our country, particularly our members and loved ones in the military: Carly Schwarzenburg, Jesus Aranda, Hannah Kajer, Nicolas Towers, Tony Bourassa, Tyler Burk, David Cantrell, Cassie Gessling, Joseph Kajer, Seth Kirch, Andrew Latham, Andrew Lowry, Hannah Pinkston, Brandon Towers, Frank Wilde, Chaplain Peter J. Williams.

We also pray for...

- Our Braille ministry, that the Word will continue to reach the blind or visually impaired around the world.
- Our educational ministry, especially our Academy, Sunday School, and Catechumens.
- Fellow Messiah members, married couples and children, young couples, singles, Pastor Chryst, and Pastor Christiansen.
- The voters, church council, and leaders of Messiah Church and School as they deliberate on the work the Lord has given His people to do.
- Our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world being persecuted for their faith.
- The spread of the Gospel around our nation and world and the work of our missionaries and relief workers.
- Rev. Solomon Yadessa and his work with the Multi-Ethnic Ministry of North Texas.
- Rev. Dr. Michael Paul and his work in Taiwan.
- The Swaddling Clothes ministry and those who come seeking assistance.
- Those studying at seminary, including David Christensen (4th Year), Tanner Sawall (4th Year), Abram Eggers (1st Year), and Vicar Peter Williams, as they prepare to serve in the Holy Ministry.
- Prayers for peace in the Middle East and Ukraine.

Pastor Chryst: pastor.chryst@messiahkeller.org
Pastor Christiansen: pastor.christiansen@messiahkeller.org
Director of Parish Music: miguel.ruiz@messiahkeller.org
MLCA Office: schooloffice@mlcatexas.org
MLCA Preschool: schooloffice@mlcatexas.org
School Board Chair: schoolboardchairman@mlcatexas.org
Board of Trustees: trustees@messiahkeller.org

Financial Director: jinel.munoz@messiahkeller.org
Financial Secretary: financial.secretary@messiahkeller.org
Church Office: churchoffice@messiahkeller.org
Church Office Administrator: linda.pinkston@messiahkeller.org
MLCA Hours: Mon-Fri, 7:30am—3:30pm.
Church Office Hours: Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm



MLCA is hiring! MLCA is in immediate need of a permanent teacher for Grades 6-8 for the current school year. This is a full-time position. If you or someone you know might be interested in this position, please contact Mrs. Smith at alison.smith@mlcatexas.org for more information!

Jesus' Family Tree



2025 Advent Devotions
Written by Pastor Mark Birkholz
Zion Lutheran Church - Naperville, Illinois

Rev. Dr. Mark Birkholz of Zion Lutheran Church in Naperville, Illinois, has written an **Advent Devotion resource for 2025**. Beginning on November 30th, this daily Advent devotional follows the **genealogy of Jesus according to St. Matthew's Gospel**. Pastor Birkholz has generously shared these devotions, and I am happy to set them before you with his permission. May they serve you well as we prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of our Savior. You may find the devotion at <https://tinyurl.com/pv6kcjcy>



*Marvel now, oh heav'n and earth,
that the Lord chose such a birth.*



Matthew 3:1–2 – “In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’” John prepared the way for Jesus by preaching repentance. Then, when Jesus’ ministry was complete and He was raised from the dead, He sent out His disciples to preach “repentance for the forgiveness of sins” (Luke 24:47). We never outgrow the need for repentance — for examining our lives, turning away from our sins and turning toward Jesus in faith to receive his forgiveness and strength for a renewed life of godliness.



KIDS HAVE QUESTIONS SERIES...

Will my dead pets be in heaven? Does everyone have a guardian angel? What does God think about suicide? Issues, Etc. is a radio talk show and podcast produced by Lutheran Public Radio in Collinsville, IL and hosted by LCMS Pastor Todd Wilken. You can listen to an ongoing Kids Have Questions series with Pastor Jonathan Conner at issuesetc.org/kidshavequestions.



A Life Thought in the Church Year for December 7 – Advent 2:

We rejoice that God Himself defends the cause of the poor and needy (Psalm 72:4) and that He does this primarily through us, His saints. We must be careful, however, that we don't fall into self-righteousness and become a pharisaical “brood of vipers” (Matthew 3:7), always pointing out the sins of others while neglecting our own. Instead, as children of Abraham, we are all to “bear fruit in keeping with repentance” (Matthew 3:8), remembering that the things of God's Word were “written for our instruction” (Romans 15:4), as well as for the instruction of others.



WORSHIP ATTENDANCE: Last Sunday: 8:00am: **99** 10:45am: **83** (Total) **182**

Sunday School: **90** **OFFERINGS FOR THE WEEK: \$19,881.60** (including online giving to Gen. Fund)

WEEKLY OFFERINGS NEEDED TO FUND THE CURRENT YEAR BUDGET: **\$ 19,549.00**

You may use this QR code for your convenience if you would like to give to Messiah. It will direct you to our Vanco System for electronic giving.

First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.
And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.
The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together;
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the
adder's den.
They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a
signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire,
and his resting place shall be glorious.

Epistle: Romans 15:4-13

Whatever was written in former days was written for
our instruction, that through endurance and through
the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have
hope. May the God of endurance and encouragement
grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in
accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with
one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus
Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has
welcomed you, for the glory of God.
For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the
circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to
confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in
order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.

As it is written,
"Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles,
and sing to your name."
And again it is said,
"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people."
And again,
"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples extol him."
And again Isaiah says,
"The root of Jesse will come,
even he who arises to rule the Gentiles;
in him will the Gentiles hope."

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in
believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you
may abound in hope.

Holy Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in
the wilderness of Judea, "Repent, for the kingdom of
heaven is at hand." For this is he who was spoken of
by the prophet Isaiah when he said,
"The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.'"

Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a
leather belt around his waist, and his food was
locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judea
and all the region about the Jordan were going out
to him, and they were baptized by him in the river
Jordan, confessing their sins.
But when he saw many of the Pharisees and
Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them,
"You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from
the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with
repentance. And do not presume to say to
yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell
you, God is able from these stones to raise up
children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the
root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not
bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."
"I baptize you with water for repentance, but he
who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose
sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you
with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork
is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor
and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he
will burn with unquenchable fire."