



# MESSIAH MESSENGER

January 2026

*Lutheran Church & School of Messiah*

*840 N. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Grand Junction, CO*



## A New Year. The Way Forward.

*Acts 9:1 “But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.”*



January often feels like a reset—new calendars, new goals, new promises. But the Church begins the year differently. We do not start with resolutions. We start with Epiphany—the season when God reveals who Jesus truly is.


Epiphany reminds us that the Christian life is not about reinventing ourselves, but about being **reoriented** by Christ. Before believers were called “Christians,” the book of Acts tells us they were known as “**the Way.**” That name says something essential: Christianity is not only something we believe; it is a path we walk. A direction given by Jesus Himself.

### When God Redirects a Life

One of the Epiphany readings this month is the conversion of St. Paul (Acts 9:1-22). Saul of Tarsus was not confused or searching. He was confident, zealous, sincere—and wrong. He believed he was serving God while opposing Jesus and His followers.

On the road to Damascus, Jesus did not offer Saul advice or self-improvement. He stopped him.

*“Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”*



In that moment, Saul lost his sight, his certainty, and his control. But in that loss, God gave him a new direction. The persecutor became a servant. The confident became dependent. The enemy of the Church became its chief witness.

Epiphany teaches us this: following Jesus is not about adjusting our plans—it is about allowing Christ to redirect them.

## Why the Early Church Called Itself “The Way”

Biblical scholar Joseph Fitzmyer notes that “*the Way*” was not a nickname given by outsiders, but a name the early Church used for itself. It described not just what Christians believed, *but how they lived*.

The language reaches back into Israel’s story, echoing Isaiah’s call to “*prepare the way of the Lord*.” To belong to “the Way” meant that life had direction, faith had shape, and daily choices mattered. That still matters today.

## The Way Forward for Us

As a new year begins, the same question stands before us: **Are we simply busy—or are we being led?** That question sits at the heart of our congregation’s Strategic Plan, summarized in two phrases you will hear often this year:

*Preparing People for the Road Ahead*

*Preparing the Next Generation for the Road Ahead*

These are not slogans. They are confessions. They confess that Christ comes first, that eternity shapes everything, and that faith must be formed—not assumed. They remind us that the Church exists not only for today, but for those who will come after us.

The Strategic Plan is not about becoming something new. It is about walking more faithfully in the Way Christ has already given us.

## Epiphany Light for a New Year

In a world marked by noise and uncertainty, the Church does not need to chase trends. It needs clarity. Epiphany gives us that clarity. Jesus is Lord. His Word still speaks. His Church still matters. His Way still leads to life.

A new year has begun.

The Way still stands.

Have a blessed New Year!

Pastor Redeker



# 2025 Year in Review

As we look back on 2025, this past year can best be described as a foundational year for Messiah Lutheran Church & School. It was not flashy, but it was faithful. Much of the work done this year focused on strengthening what supports our shared mission: preparing people—and the next generation—for the road ahead.

At the heart of everything remained Christ's work through Word and Sacrament. In 2025, we rejoiced in baptisms of infants, children, and adults; welcomed new members; celebrated marriage; and commended faithful saints into the care of our risen Lord. We also walked together through illness, loss, and moments of crisis. In all of it, Christ continued to prepare His people not only for life here, but for the road toward eternity as we wait for our Savior.

Our worship life was shaped with care for how people actually live. Wednesday evening services were restructured into a more contemplative format and moved to a consistent 6:00 pm start time. This has made worship more accessible for families with children and for older members, while bringing greater continuity across Advent, Lent, and other midweek services. These changes were made so that worship continues to form and sustain God's people along the road ahead.

Faith formation and Christian education remained central. Through Bible studies, Adult Information/New Member classes, women's studies, and online offerings, adults were strengthened in the faith. In the school, Battle Ready faith formation was integrated into 2025 religion classes so students receive instruction even when worship attendance is inconsistent. In this way, the church and school worked together to prepare hearts and minds in Christ.

Messiah Lutheran School continued to live out its role of preparing the next generation for the road ahead. Enrollment stabilized and began trending upward, ACE Scholarships provided meaningful tuition support, and academic growth was documented through assessment tools. At the same time, significant work moved forward on accreditation, with staff, parents, and congregation members working together in preparation for the site visit scheduled for April 2026.

Much of 2025 involved important work that happens quietly but matters deeply. Administrative, governance, and financial systems were strengthened. Long-standing gaps were addressed, policies updated, accounting clarified, and a full financial compilation completed. These steps give us clarity, transparency, and stability—so ministry can continue faithfully into the future.

Because of the work done in 2025, Messiah enters 2026 with greater confidence and direction. The church and school move forward together with one mission: rooted in Christ, focused on eternity, and faithful in daily life—preparing people, and the next generation, for the road ahead.



*“Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.” (Psalm 127:1)*

## Congregational Meeting Reports' Summary from December 14, 2025

### Pastor's Report

Pastor Redeker described 2025 as a **foundational year** for Messiah—faithful rather than flashy. The year focused on strengthening systems, clarifying direction, and caring for people through both joyful and difficult seasons of life. At the center of everything remained Christ's work through **Word and Sacrament**, with baptisms, new members received, a wedding celebrated, and faithful saints commended into the care of the risen Lord.

Pastoral care continued through hospital visits, shut-in care, funerals, counseling, and crisis response, with increasing partnership from elders and Ministry Action Teams. Worship life remained Christ-centered, with midweek services reshaped into a more contemplative format and moved to a consistent 6:00 pm time for greater accessibility and continuity. Christian education remained strong across all ages, including adult Bible studies and the integration of *Battle Ready* faith formation into school religion classes.

Messiah Lutheran School continued as a vital arm of the mission, with enrollment stabilizing, academic growth documented, and accreditation work advancing toward an April 2026 site visit. Significant behind-the-scenes work strengthened administration, governance, and finances, providing long-needed clarity and transparency. Because of this foundational work, Messiah enters 2026 with momentum, clarity, and purpose as we continue preparing people—and the next generation—for the road ahead.

### School Ministry Report – Jun–Dec 2025

Messiah Lutheran School experienced a strong first half of the 2025–26 school year. More than 25 adults—staff and volunteers—faithfully invested in students' spiritual and academic growth. Academic performance remains strong, with MAPS Growth testing placing students overall in the 60th–70th percentile.

The school benefited from \$21,000 in ACE Scholarships, successful PTA events, and a growing connection between church and school through Lunch Bunch prayer partners. Athletics, preschool programming, and staff development continued to flourish. Accreditation renewal is on track, with broad participation from staff, parents, and congregation members ahead of the April 2026 visit.

Looking ahead, marketing efforts are underway, facility upgrades are being funded through grants, and plans are moving forward to offer high school classes beginning in the 2026–27 school year to meet a growing community need.

### Youth, Christian Education & Outreach – DCE Report

Youth ministry expanded through regular Youth Nights, service opportunities, and planning for future trips and events. Birthday outreach to youth and intentional follow-up with inactive members strengthened connections. Campus ministry at CMU continued through meals, events, and partnerships, with opportunities for more congregational involvement.

Christian education remained active through Kids Connection, Kids Time during worship, adult Bible studies, and continued development of the *Battle Ready* program across multiple age levels. Stewardship efforts included fundraising initiatives and partnerships that support both youth activities and broader ministry needs.



Finance Action Team Report

The Finance Action Team reported that 2025 was a **significant year for financial cleanup and transparency**. A long-awaited Accounting Compilation Report was completed, giving Messiah a clear and accurate financial picture for the first time in years—an essential step for accreditation.

Year-to-date revenue is slightly over budget, though fundraising remains below budget and will need continued attention. Cash balances remain stable, and expenses have been managed carefully. Outside accounting support has been secured, contracts are being reviewed for cost savings, and further work on financial policies and fundraising strategies is planned. The team continues to seek additional members to support this important work.

Administration Report – Julie McEndree

I would like to thank the congregation for welcoming me back. We are very blessed to be here in Grand Junction and at Messiah Lutheran.

In the office – we are working on expenses and ways of cutting costs. We are going through contracts and looking at less expensive options and new ways of doing things.

We are also working on policies and procedures with Pastor, so that there are clear guidelines to go by. The Finance Action Team is very diligent in going through the financials and helping with day-to-day operations.

The Memorial Wall has been updated, the Giving Tree was a huge success, and we are working on end-of-year activities.

I’d like to thank all who volunteer in the office. It is greatly appreciated!!!

Official Acts of the Congregation

January 1 – December 14, 2025

Baptisms (7)

- May 25 — Sarah Mauser (Infant)
- October 12 — Simon Babcock (Adult)
- October 12 — Crystal Gilleece (Adult)
- October 12 — Hailey Gilleece (Child)
- October 12 — Jeremy Pouloin (Adult)
- December 10 — Bruin Antony Bonnell (Child)
- December 10 — Campbell James Bonnell (Child)

Weddings (1)

- October 18 — Crystal Brown & Aaron Gilleece

New Members Received (11)

- Buchman, Fillman, Geis, Morse, Krelovich, Allred, Magnus, Larson, Miller, Pouloin, Lampshire

Transfers Out (2)

- Wickam family → Trinity Lutheran, Cantonment, FL
- Wilber family → Redeemer Lutheran, Delta

Member Deaths (9)

- Jessie Mello; Leland Ottman; Duane Sickler; Richard Bann
- Douglas “Doug” Johnson; Shirley Robinson; Barbara Freeman
- Linda Messenger; Emogene Kukuk, Donald Filman

Summary Totals

- Baptisms: 7
- Weddings: 1
- New Members: 11
- Transfers Out: 2
- Member Deaths: 10



How You Can Help

As we prepare people—and the next generation—for the road ahead, there are many simple ways you can support the work God is doing at Messiah:

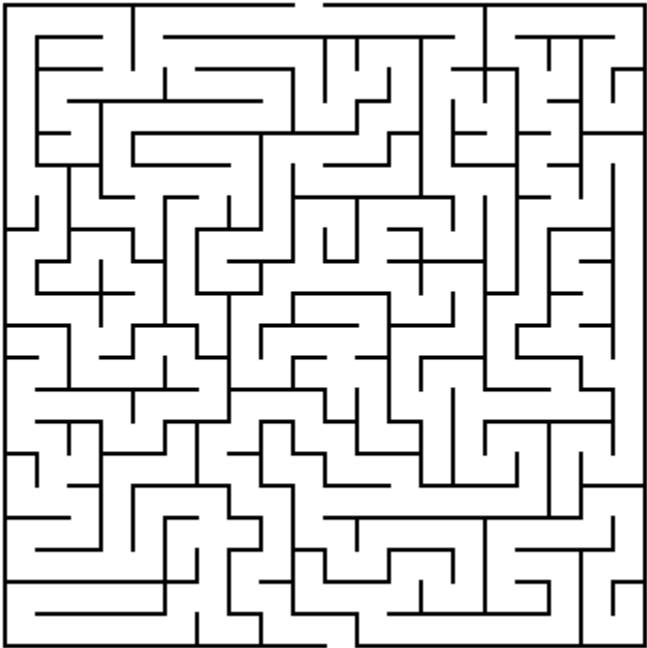
- Pray for our congregation, school, staff, and students as we move into 2026.
- Attend worship and Bible study regularly to be strengthened in Word and Sacrament.
- Volunteer where you are able—especially in areas like the finance team, helping with maintenance items, Kids Connection, youth events, office support, or hospitality.
- Support stewardship efforts, including designated gifts, fundraising events, and ongoing offerings.
- Encourage and invite others—a kind word or invitation often opens doors.
- Consider serving on a Ministry Action Team or the Finance Action Team as needs arise.

Every act of faithfulness, large or small, helps us move forward together in Christ.

MAZE GAME!

Can you make it from one side to the other?

Start



Finish



Luke 24 Shirts – The Easter Story

Luke 24 is the Easter story. Get it? It's a continuation of the Luke2 Project. What a great way to continue the ministry of wearing shirts to allow the Holy Spirit to place Christ centered thoughts in people who see you wearing it, maybe even start a conversation about Jesus!

The goal of the Luke24 Project (as well as the Luke2 Project) is "Every Christian, Every Easter, Every Wear." Another fun play on words!

You might notice in the design that the 4 is empty. That is a purposeful creation. It includes Luke 2 and symbolizes the empty tomb with an empty 4.

Messiah youth will be selling these shirts after worship each week from now until February 8th. Shirts are \$25. Long sleeves are \$30. Shirts should arrive by mid-March.



# ✝ Celebrate Jesus All Year Long!

I was first introduced to the Skit Guys by the DCE I was assisting in Las Vegas. I've been a fan of the Skit Guys from the first time I saw one of their videos. They even came to one of the LCMS Youth Gatherings (2019, I think). They are going through some changes and now go by the name 231 Collective. (Please keep them in prayer.) But they still have the same great content. I recently received a video promo from them. [Click Here](#) to watch it. (It's been purchased. So don't worry; it's just easier to use their link.)

In this video, Tommy and Eddie talk about a neighbor who leaves their lights up all year long, changing color depending on the holiday. But their point is that we shouldn't let our light dim just because the Christmas lights come down. The Light we have, of course, is Jesus! Jesus' light never dims.

As the children's song goes, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine." Or another favorite Christmas tune (which I usually think of as a VBS song), "Go tell it on the mountain over the hills and everywhere." We have the greatest news ever. Don't be ashamed to let your light shine or go tell it on the mountain! And when the HOA asks why your lights are still up, you have two options: A.) tell them the lights are Epiphany lights, Valentine's lights, St. Patrick's lights (both St. Valentine and St. Patrick have interesting stories about Jesus, by the way), Easter lights and of course, the longest season of all, Pentecost lights! Or B.) simply ask, "Do you really want to tell Jesus that it was your HOA duty to enforce the removal of His light?"

If you do tell your HOA that your lights are Epiphany lights on January 6th, remember the acronym I used a couple years ago...

Because Epiphany is the celebration of the first non-Jewish people to see Jesus, we can say **Every Person Invited**. What a blessing! Jesus was sent to save the entire world from sin because of God's great love for us. Take a moment to read John 3:16-21. How many times does this passage state the world... whoever... everyone? *Every person!* And because of God's great love for us, we **Praise Him!** Through this great gift, we are called to tell the world about God's amazing grace and wonderful love for everyone. (Matthew 28:19) **And Now You.** That's you as in you reading this; you as in your neighbor; you as in **E.P.I.P.H.A.N.Y.** is for everyone! Share that gift (it never runs out); let your Light shine; celebrate Jesus all year long.

Jesus loves you!  
Merry Christmas!  
Happy Epiphany!

DCE Jonathan  
Peterson

## Rib City Show Us Your Colors

2025 receipts for Rib City have been turned in. Rib City will be making a donation of \$62.43 to Messiah.

Rib City donates 5% of your food bill. All three locations, all year long! Ask your server about 'Show Us Your Colors'. They will stamp your receipt. Bring your receipt to Messiah and we get 5%!

# From the Principal's Desk

Happy New Year! Students return to class on the 6th, so we still have a little time to make extra preparations. The Christmas/New Year break is a refreshing time for students and staff, allowing us all to return in January ready to tackle the second half of the school year.

One of the projects we are working on in the school side of the building is to replace the old fluorescent lighting with new LED fixtures. The fixtures are wearing out and bulbs are dying but the parts to fix them are no longer being produced. The new lights will also eliminate the flickering and buzzing so common to fluorescent lights that can be especially hard on young eyes.

We have been blessed to be informed recently that the Lion's Club of Grand Junction has awarded us a grant for over \$10,000 to complete this project during this school year! We received donations last year to complete three classrooms, and this grant will fully fund the remainder of the project. We need to be sure to express our gratitude to Ridge Electric for providing the manpower and expertise to install the lights, and to Consolidated Electrical Distributors (CED) for getting the parts for us at a reduced cost.

The Lion's Club grant also has a few requirements for us as grant recipients. These will not be hard to fulfill if we work together. These requirements are:

- Participate in their annual parade, February 14, 2026 and also in February 2027
  - We can enter a float or just walk with our banner - this would be fun for kids and adults alike.
- Provide cakes for the cake walk at the Lion's annual carnival, February 14, 2026 and also in February 2027. Cakes may be homemade or store bought.
- You will also see the Lion's Club as a sponsor on the new banners we will be getting for events.

These represent such a small effort to recognize the size of gift they are giving us this year. Please watch for details in the Messiah Minute and in Sunday bulletins as we get closer to these events. Participating in these events will have the added benefit of promoting our church and school to more people in the community.

Faithfully,  
Principal Sue Eberhard



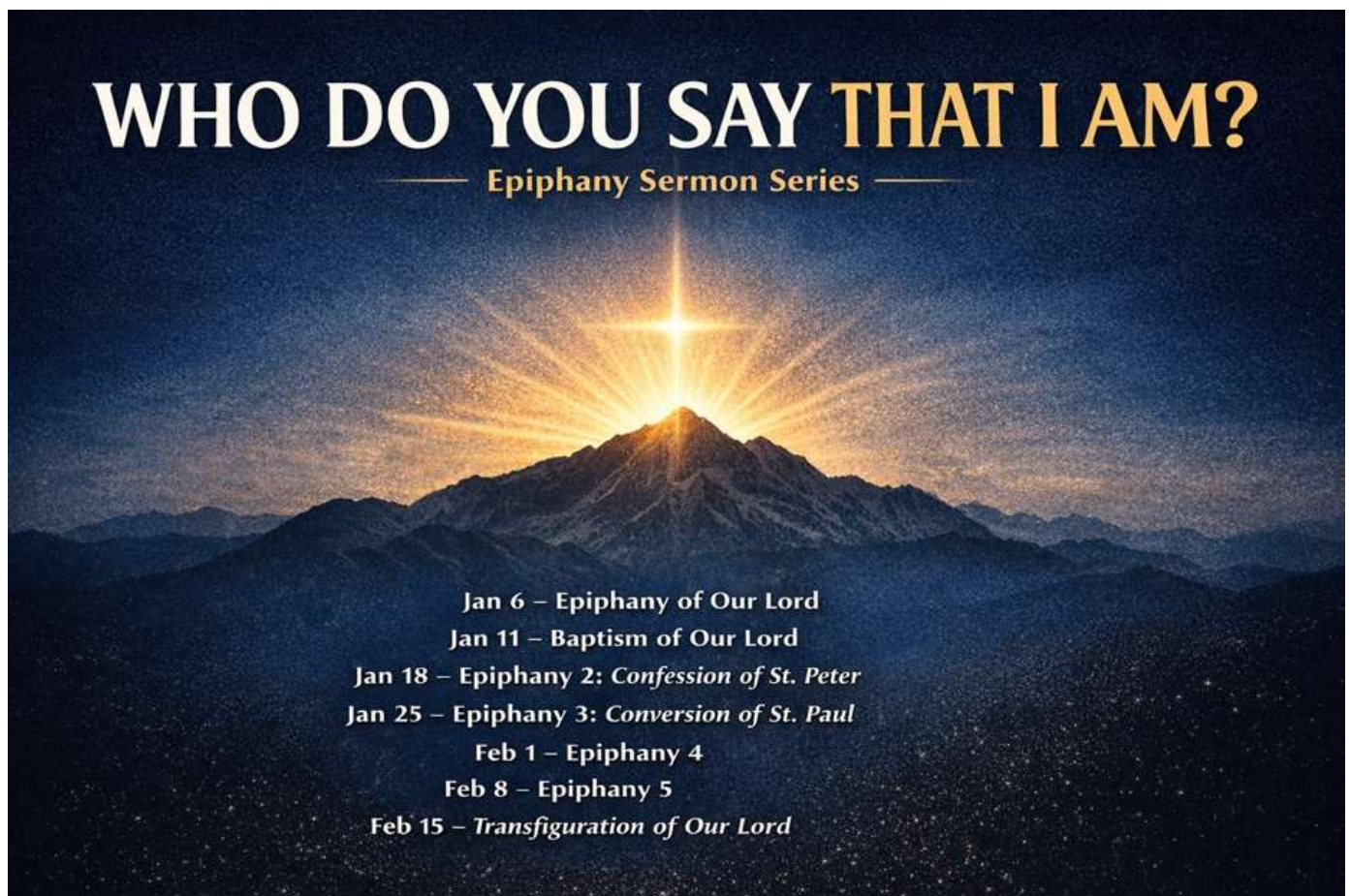


# Epiphany Sermon Series:

## Who Do You Say That I Am?

During the season of Epiphany, we hear Jesus ask a question that still matters on the road ahead: *“Who do men say that I am?”* In a world full of competing voices and shifting identities, Epiphany reveals who Jesus truly is—God’s Son, our Savior, and the Light of the world.

This series speaks especially to the questions many face today, including younger generations and those who feel disconnected from the church. Epiphany reminds us that following Jesus is not about labels or trends, but about trusting the One who walks with us now and leads us toward eternity as we wait for our Savior.



## Youth Night Day for Middle School & High School

All middle school, high school, *AND PARENTS!!!* are invited to a combined youth night, which will actually be during the day, in January. *We're going skiing!* Saturday, January 17th. We'll be skiing at Powderhorn with tailgating food. Contact DCE Jonathan if you would like to attend. We're also in need of adult chaperone's and drivers to get everyone to/from the mountain. Thank you to the Taylor's (Baer's parents) for hosting. Click Here to see the schedule of upcoming youth nights. RSVP to DCE Jonathan to sign up to host.

# Messiah's Strategic Ministry Execution

## Our Strategic Plan: What We're Focusing On

As we begin a new year together, I want to share—simply and clearly—what we are focusing on as a congregation and school.

Strategic planning doesn't mean changing who we are. It means being **wise stewards** of what God has entrusted to us. Rather

than trying to do everything at once, we are concentrating on a few important areas, in the right order and at the right time.

First, we are paying attention to **our community**. We are learning who lives around us, what families are facing, and where there is need for the Gospel and Christian education. We want to serve people as they truly are, not as we assume they are.

Second, we are being honest about **our capacity**. We are recognizing our strengths, naming our limitations, and addressing gaps before they become problems. This is not about criticism; it is about wisdom and good stewardship.

Third, we are strengthening **our systems**. This includes admissions, governance, accreditation, and clear procedures. Strong systems don't replace ministry—they support it and help it endure.

Fourth, we are focusing **our efforts**. Instead of doing many things at once, we are setting priorities and being careful about timing. Focus allows us to move forward together without unnecessary strain.

Finally, everything leads to **strengthening our culture**. Our greatest priority is discipleship, unity, and forming lives shaped by Christ. Programs may change, but a Christ-centered culture endures.

To help guide this work, I've been using four books—not as replacements for Scripture, but as tools for clarity and stewardship: *The Art of War*, *Turnaround*, *The ONE Thing*, and *Differentiate or Die*. Together, they help us prepare wisely, focus clearly, and remain faithful to who we are.

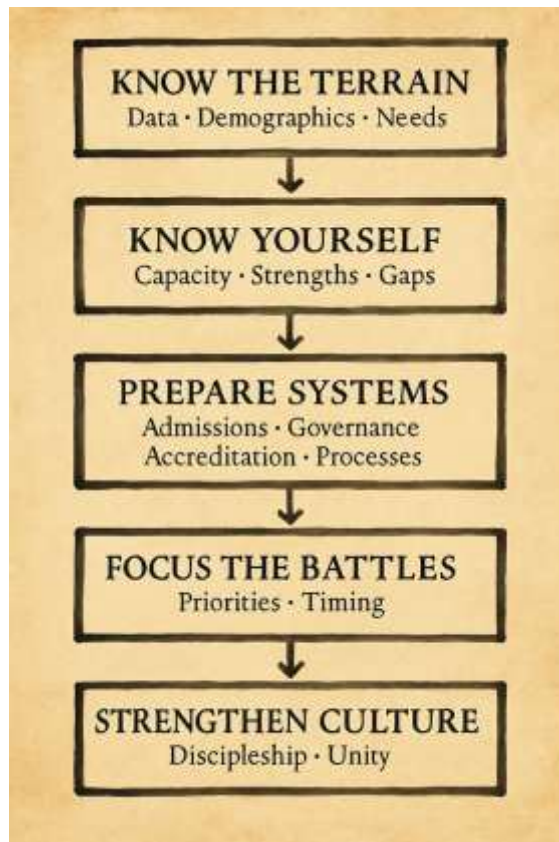
At the center of all of this is Jesus Christ—preached clearly, taught faithfully, and lived out together.

Thank you for your prayers and trust as we move forward in Christ.





## Strategic Plan — At a Glance



### What are we focusing on?

- **Knowing our community**  
Understanding who lives around us and what they need.
- **Knowing ourselves**  
Being honest about our strengths and limitations.
- **Strengthening systems**  
Clear processes that support ministry and longevity.
- **Focusing priorities**  
Doing the right things at the right time.
- **Strengthening culture**  
Discipleship, unity, and a shared life in Christ.

### Why these four books?

- *The Art of War* — wisdom and preparation
- *Turnaround* — strengthening foundations
- *The ONE Thing* — focus and priorities
- *Differentiate or Die* — clarity about who we are

### What stays the same?

Christ at the center.

The Gospel proclaimed.

Faith taught and lived out together.

## *Messiah's Strategic Ministry Execution continued...*

As we put this strategic plan into practice, we are also introducing new logos that help communicate our shared mission clearly and consistently.



### **What These Logos Mean**

These new logos help show **who we are and how our ministries fit together.**

- The **cross** reminds us that everything we do is centered on Jesus Christ.
- The **same lettering** shows that the church and school are one ministry.
- The **different colors** simply help tell church and school materials apart.

Nothing about our faith, teaching, or mission has changed.  
The logos are just a clearer way to show what already unites us.

### **What We Mean by “Preparing for the Road Ahead”**

You will see two closely related phrases connected to our church and school.

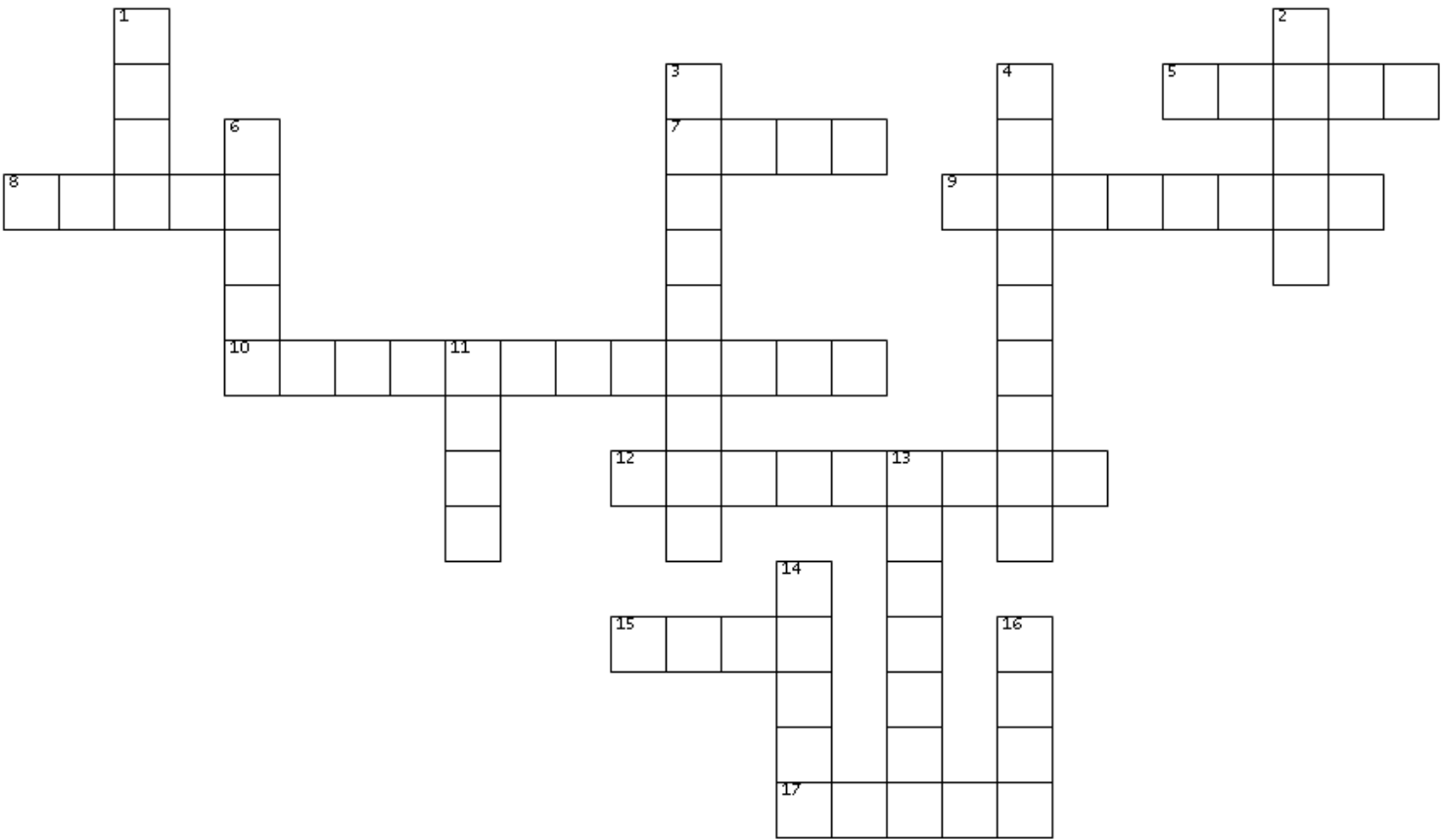
**“Preparing People for the Road Ahead”** describes our church-wide mission. Everything we do centers on preparing people in Christ for the road toward **eternity**, as we wait for the return of our Savior.

**“Preparing the Next Generation for the Road Ahead”** describes the school’s role within that same mission. In the school, we prepare children first and foremost in Christ and His Word. At the same time, we provide an excellent education so students are well prepared for daily life, responsible citizenship, and the skills they need for the road ahead here and now.

These are not two different missions. They are **one mission**, lived out in different ways—rooted in Christ, focused on eternity, and faithful in daily life as we wait for our Lord.



# IN THE WORD: Luke 2:1-20 (ESV)



### ACROSS

- 5. Where the Christ Child was found
- 7. Direction traveled
- 8. Gift associated with burial
- 9. Herod was this at hearing the news
- 10. Gift used for worship and incense
- 12. City where Herod lived
- 15. Astrologers
- 17. King ruling when Jesus was born

### DOWN

- 1. What led the travelers?
- 2. A region
- 3. Where was Jesus born?
- 4. Posture the Magi took before Jesus
- 6. A kind of priest
- 11. Title Herod heard applied to Jesus
- 13. They went this way
- 14. Old Testament prophet quoted about Bethlehem
- 16. Gift made of precious metal

## CMU Dinners

We had a great time serving dinner to CMU students in December. [Click Here](#) for some pictures. The students of CMU are very appreciative of all the dinners that have been provided by congregations and campus ministries in the valley. Contact [DCE Jonathan](#) if you would like to help and/or be a point person. There are a variety of menu options already. Or you could make up your own. Being the point person doesn't mean you do everything. You would help gather volunteers, plan the menu, make a list of supplies needed or delegate all these things to others.



## Ladies Guild News

**The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML)** is an official auxiliary of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. LWML focuses on affirming each woman's relationship with Christ, encouraging and equipping women to live out their Christian lives in active mission ministries and to support global missions. Each woman here at Messiah is a part of LWML. So join in Sunday Jan 25<sup>th</sup> **bringing loose change for the Mite Box**. Mite Box contributions account to millions of dollars that fund district and national mission grants. Here at Messiah, we collect Mite Boxes every last Sunday of the month! Please pick up a little box in the Narthex.

### Home Projects Receiving Funds:

- Bibles for all third graders in our church
- Updating two school computers
- \$500 toward the School Scholarship Fund
- Replacing select church banners

### Away Mission Projects Receiving Funds:

- Hurricane relief efforts in North Carolina
- Support for seminary students
- Ysleta Lutheran Mission
- California Fire Relief Fund

### National Mission Grants (2023–2025)

Thanks to your faithful mite donations, these grants are being funded:

- Orphan Grain Train – \$100,000
- A Healing Space for At-Risk Children – \$100,000
- Mobile Kitchen – \$85,000
- Mental Health Outreach – \$96,500
- Church in Kenya – \$80,000
- Bringing God's Word to India – \$100,000
- ...and many more!

Your loose change in our mite boxes is making a big difference—thank you for giving!

### Reminders & Future Dates

- Mite Box Sunday – Last Sunday of every month

## City Market Donations

Link your City Market/Kroger customer card to Messiah. Kroger will make a donation to Messiah based on your shopping. This doesn't cost you anything; doing your daily shopping helps Messiah through the generosity of Kroger! See DCE Jonathan if you need help linking your Kroger account with Messiah.



# IN THE WORD CROSS-WORD

Acts 4:8-13

T O H M H P O S S D T S N T S  
L N D E S I A R R U D Y V S X  
E O F A S N S E Z B S Z Q I Q  
N I K F E P L L V T Q E D R D  
O T M W E D I U E U L E J H E  
T A R O E E M R E T T W O C I  
S V P R N E Q S I A J R D H F  
R L S O K D T W C T A E G T I  
E A T M R I Y U G H L M H E C  
N S L C O A D I H P U B P R U  
R C D N R E T E P O E R N A R  
O X E E N R A I X O L M H Z C  
C D C U O L R Q M A N Y A A U  
A Q Z Y E C U Q V N E I R N Z  
S R E D L I U B O L D N E S S

Find the word in the puzzle.

Words can go in any direction. Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

- |             |          |            |
|-------------|----------|------------|
| Boldness    | Builders | Christ     |
| Cornerstone | Crippled | Crucified  |
| Dead        | Deed     | Elders     |
| Healed      | Holy     | Jesus      |
| Man         | Name     | Nazareth   |
| People      | Peter    | Questioned |
| Raised      | Rulers   | Salvation  |
| Spirit      | Stone    | Uneducated |

**ADULT  
INFORMATION  
CLASS**

**January 5-19**

**Monday evenings, 6:00-9:00 PM**

For those desiring a review of our teachings  
or interested in membership at  
Messiah Lutheran Church

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**BIBLE STUDY  
ON ROMANS**

**Begins January 8, 2026**

**Thursday evenings, 6:30 PM**

**Zoom**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**



## Romans Bible Study

Why does life of faith still feel conflicted—pulled between hope and frustration, confidence and weakness, freedom and struggle? In Paul’s letter to the Romans, this tension is not explained as a battle between body and soul, but as life lived between *flesh* and *Spirit*: between the old world marked by sin and death, and the new life God has already begun in Christ.

This Bible study will explore Romans as a letter about real life, real struggle, and real hope. Paul shows how God’s grace, through Christ’s death and resurrection, creates one people and how the Holy Spirit sustains us as we live “between the times,” grounded in forgiveness, shaped by grace, and oriented toward the coming glory. Whether you are new to faith, returning after time away, or have walked with Christ for years, Romans speaks directly to life as it truly is—and to the hope God has promised.

Join us beginning Thursday evening at 6:30 pm on January 8, 2026 via Zoom! Meeting ID: 830 0615 1276 Passcode: Thurs630 (T must be capitalized).

# Vacation Bible School, June 8 – 12, 2026

## Snowball Mountain Challenge - Find your strength in God!

June will be right around the corner. We're looking for volunteers for a variety of positions. When you sign up, you'll be in charge of gathering supplies (or making a list of supplies needed for the congregation to donate) and making sure your station is ready for a great week!

We'll need group leaders (help children get from station to station) and station leaders for games, crafts, snack, Bible story time and science!

The VBS curriculum will be purchased this year. The package will have all the notes and reminders for you. You'll just need to read through it and prepare your station. Contact [DCE Jonathan](#) to sign up!



## Battle Ready

Battle Ready Modules (for 7th/8th graders) and world religions/Lutheran distinction (for 9th/10th graders) continue to help our youth become Battle Ready. Modules meet on Sunday mornings at 10:30 am in the computer room. World Religions/Lutheran Distinction meet on Sunday mornings after modules, beginning between 11:30 am and noon. January Meeting for Red Catechism students (5th/6th graders). All 5th & 6th graders are invited to a check-in meeting for memory work and Red Workbook. DCE Jonathan will answer any questions about the layout for Battle Ready over the next 4-5 years and check in on memory work. **January 25th** after Bible study and Kids Connection (**11:30am-ish**). 5th graders will also be introduced to Pastor's 6 week first communion course. Pastor's first communion class will be Sunday mornings at 8am February 22 - March 29, 2026.

## Quilting Group

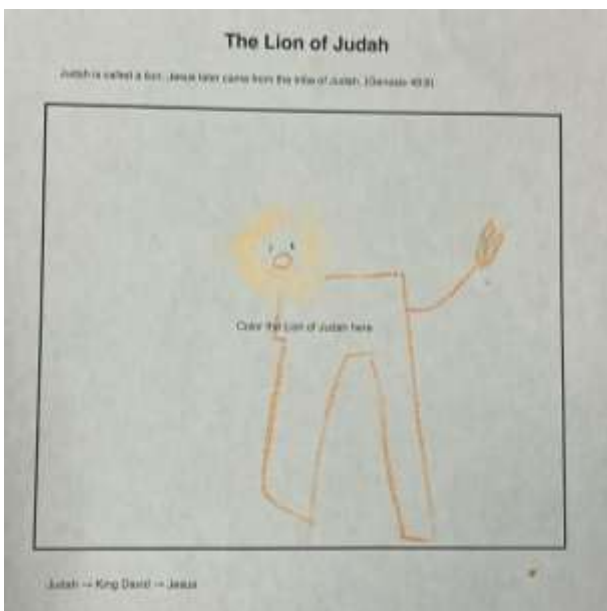
If you're a quilter—or just curious—we welcome you! Join us every Tuesday from 9:00 AM to noon in the Fellowship Hall downstairs. Come see what we're working on or bring your own project and join in!



# Bible Studies

## ► Kids Connection

All children in 6th grade and under are invited to Kids Connection after worship every Sunday. We're going through all the stories of the Bible! In December, one of the lessons was about the 12 tribes of Israel. We focused on Judah being the ancestor of King David and eventually Jesus!



## ► Women's Bible Study

Saturday morning Women's Bible Study is on winter break and will resume Feb 7<sup>th</sup>. We will study "The God of All Comfort" by Donna Pyle. Have questions or comments, contact Beth Weber at [weber4342@gmail.com](mailto:weber4342@gmail.com)

## ► Men's Bible Study

Bible Study is every Tuesday morning on at 7:00 am in the Fellowship Hall.

## ► Wednesday Bible Study

Join us a 9:30 am each Wednesday as we look at 3:16 -- How does each book of the Bible point to Jesus in chapter 3 verse 16?

## ► Sipping & Searching Men's Fellowship & Bible Study

All men are invited to a Sunday evening study. We've been reading and discussing The Screwtape Letters. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month at the home of Daniel Seatvet. Contact Daniel at 303-524-2114 for the address. We'll be discussing letters 11 - 15 on January 4th.

## ► Pastor's Bible Study

Meet with Pastor online at 6:30 pm  
Meeting ID: 830 0615 1276  
Passcode: Thurs630

## ► Jesus Book Club

We are currently reading "The Screwtape Letters," which is a satirical commentary of spiritual warfare by C.S Lewis. Come join us in the multipurpose room shortly after service on Sunday as we discuss these books and religion.

## ► High School Bible Study

All high school youth are invited to a new Bible study on Sunday mornings. We meet in room 340, the upstairs north east classroom, above the preschool room. Invite a friend! We're starting a new study in January going through The Story.

## ► Early Church Study

An in-depth small group Bible study of the early church begins Saturday, January 4 at 2:00pm. Order your study guide, Lifelight, Acts of the Apostles, part 1, through Concordia Publishing or call Charlie Johnson by Monday, Dec.14 at (209)607-7561 to save on a group order. Meet new people and get 2026 started right with God's Word.

# DIY Has Its Limits: Why Estate and Gift Planning Takes a Team

Rick boasted to Allen, “I just watched a YouTube video and was able to fix my twenty-year-old clothes dryer. I am feeling so confident now, that I bet I could use one of those online tools and write my own will too. I can probably get this all done for less than \$100.”



Allen, who had just worked with his attorney said, “That’s impressive that you fixed your dryer. But let me ask a few questions. Do you own property in more than one state? How are you going to choose who serves as your personal representative? Which choices for end-of-life medical concerns are you going to choose? Would inheritance to family be best in a lump sum or stretched over time? What is the most tax savvy way to minimize taxes when making a charitable gift? I don’t think you are going to get all these answers through YouTube.”

The reality is, there are many self-serve opportunities in life, from ATM’s, to self-checkout at the grocery store to ordering a ride at the airport using Waymo, the autonomous cabs. But you don’t get to self-diagnose illness or write your own prescriptions. You need a doctor to do that. You can’t fill your own air conditioning unit with refrigerant. A licensed technician must do that. So also, in the complex world of estates, you need the assistance of those who specialize in doing this work, to make sure that mistakes don’t happen. Your attorney or financial advisor bring much to the table. But sometimes they specialize in wealth creation or wealth protection. Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor specializes in charitable gifts and the smartest way to use the right asset, in the right way for the right gift. It takes a team.

To get your team all pulling for you, helping you in your faithful stewardship of God’s gifts, your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can assist.

**Jason Jones, CGP, CDE**  
**Gift Planning Counselor**  
**LCMS Foundation**  
**(970) 988-0305 - Cell**  
[Jason.Jones@LFND.org](mailto:Jason.Jones@LFND.org)

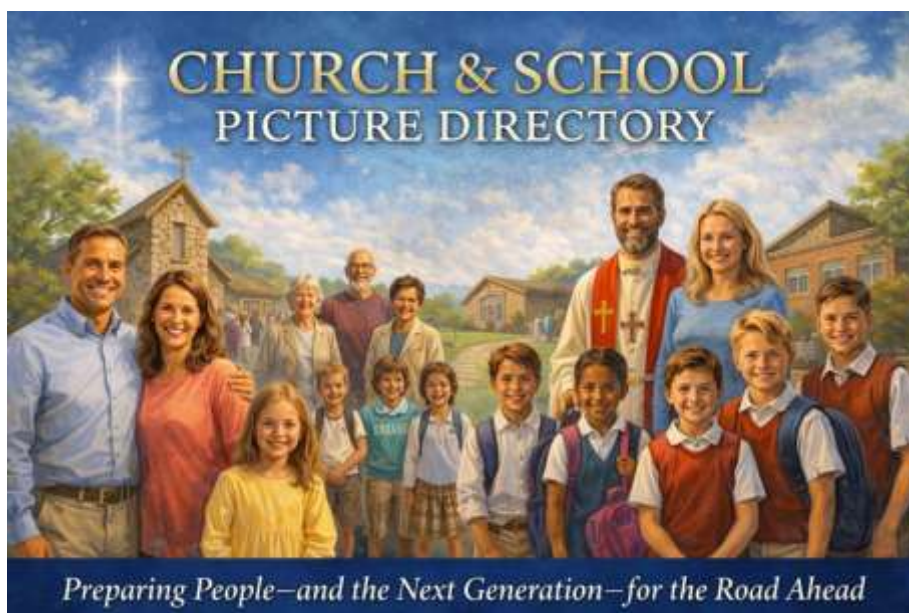
## Raise Right Gift Cards

Purchase a gift card through Raise Right. You get the full amount of the gift card. Raise Right makes a donation to Messiah. See DCE Jonathan with any questions.





GOOD NEWS! Health Haven, the new medical arm of TPC has been launched. "Health Haven reaches women on line - especially those searching for or ordering the abortion pill - to offer truth, compassion, and real medical care. With over 60% of abortions now happening through the pill, TPC's mission has never been more urgent." They are asking for our continued support and for joining them in prayer for the month of November for issues related to adoption.



## Volunteers Needed: Church & School Picture Directory

It has been many years since we last created a church and school picture directory, and we would like to begin planning a new one as part of our work to prepare people—and the next generation—for the road ahead.

This picture directory would serve as a keepsake that captures our shared life together in Christ—worship, school, fellowship, and ministry—for today and for years to come.

We are looking for two or three people willing to help spearhead this project by organizing photos, coordinating with staff, and guiding the process. This is not a large weekly commitment, but it does require care, organization, and attention to detail.

If you are interested, please contact the church office or speak with Pastor **by the end of January**, so planning can begin in an orderly way.



## **UNOFFICIAL Minutes Messiah Church and School Congregational Meeting December 14, 2025**

### Financial Update:

- Treasurer Bob Mayer reported a positive financial condition
- Completed a financial compilation report, supporting our accreditation efforts
- Recent generous contributions have improved our financial standing

### Strategic Plan Highlights:

- Continued implementation of our strategic plan, focusing on:
  - Reducing church subsidy to the school from 70% to 45%
  - Strategic use of endowments
  - Targeted recruitment efforts

### Key Decisions:

1. Approved Call for Kindergarten Teacher
  - Current kindergarten teacher retiring after 30+ years
  - Seeking a full-time replacement from Concordia University System schools
2. Approved Call for Music Director
  - 50% church music, 50% school music position
  - Aims to support church and school music programs
  - Addressing current staffing needs and future growth
  - Seeking a graduate from Concordia University System schools
3. Approved Call for Elementary/Middle School Teacher
  - Supports school expansion and upcoming micro high school initiative
  - Provides additional support for new teachers and principal
  - Seeking a graduate from Concordia University System schools

### School Expansion Updates:

- Preparing to launch micro high school in August 2026
- Starting with 9th-10th grades
- Intentionally small class sizes to provide nurturing Christian education
- Recruitment efforts include targeted social media marketing



# ◆ ★ *Happy Birthday* ★ ◆

## *Messiah Members*

1-Jan	Brian L. Hartbauer
2-Jan	Louie G. Hartbauer, Maureen Arnold
3-Jan	Liam O. Conwell
4-Jan	Sheri Phillips
5-Jan	Aaron Goetz
8-Jan	Corky L. Miller
9-Jan	Scott S. Mauser
10-Jan	Steve Moore, Addison N. Wilke, Riverlynn Conwell
11-Jan	Helen Diers
12-Jan	Angelina Atencio, Shyloh H. Dimmick, Lucas S. Bonnell
13-Jan	Leighton M. Stone, Elizabeth Davis
14-Jan	Debra Schonscheck, Conner D. Thompson, Kristen A. Barker, Jill H. Weiss
15-Jan	Karson C. Ehlert
17-Jan	Jennifer M. Morris, Elijah L. Messenger
18-Jan	Joleen Ryman
19-Jan	Linda Callison
21-Jan	Dorothy J. Roberts, Matthew Gottschalk
22-Jan	Grace Y. Roberts
23-Jan	Matt Z. Bonnell, Cody J. Bonnell, Mikel Lewis
26-Jan	Maxine V. Wiley, Michael R. Manzanares
27-Jan	Eileen Johnson
28-Jan	Linda M. Bishop, Lois A. MacDonald, Phyllis Ammon
29-Jan	Alan M. Moore, Megan Fry
30-Jan	Janet Wilke, Garrett Sudduth, Ursula Clark

# Messiah's Board of Elders

Duane Lofton      970-234-3544      [leftylofton@yahoo.com](mailto:leftylofton@yahoo.com)  
~Aden – Bonner

Matt Bonnell      970-250-5916      [mattzbonnell@gmail.com](mailto:mattzbonnell@gmail.com)  
~Bonnell & Schultz families

Don Olbert      H:970-523-1106 C:970-420-2458  
~Bonnie – Clark      [emiliedon@yahoo.com](mailto:emiliedon@yahoo.com)

Curtis Peterson      763-203-1393      [cdprainbow@gmail.com](mailto:cdprainbow@gmail.com)  
~Clemmer – Clubb & Freeman – Fry & Stull -Zarecor

Victor Lozano      H:970-433-7890 C:818-726-6234  
~Colvin – Franke      [colozos1@gmail.com](mailto:colozos1@gmail.com)

John McDowell      970-216-6868      [mjmcdowell2@msn.com](mailto:mjmcdowell2@msn.com)  
~Gaines - Kuhlman

Peter Chaney      970-200-1203      [peterchaney67@gmail.com](mailto:peterchaney67@gmail.com)  
~Kukuk - Metz

John O'Connor      970-250-4321      [sixgun6x@gmail.com](mailto:sixgun6x@gmail.com)  
~Meyer – Powell

Ray Seeley      H:970-243-8917 C:970-260-8954  
~ Ratliff - Sommers `      [gailseeley@bresnan.net](mailto:gailseeley@bresnan.net)

Gary Anderson      970-260-1598      [gla64afa94@charter.nt](mailto:gla64afa94@charter.nt)  
~ Soriano – Strothers & Fruita Members

## Prayer Chain

If you would like to receive information on who needs prayers or if you would like to receive them, send an email to [sec@mlgj.org](mailto:sec@mlgj.org)



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SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	31	Jan 1	2	3
Christmas Break (No School)						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9am Divine Service</li><li>10:30am Battle Ready Modules</li><li>10:30am Education Hour</li><li>11:30am Battle Ready WR/DD</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6pm Scouts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7am Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)</li><li>9am Quilt Ladies-FH</li></ul>	<div>Bulletin Items Due 9AM</div> <div>New Year's Eve</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>8:30am Chapel</li><li>9:30am Wednesday Bible Study</li><li>6pm Midweek Contemplative Service</li></ul>	New Year's Day		
Christmas Break (No School)						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9am Divine Service</li><li>10:30am Battle Ready Modules</li><li>10:30am Education Hour</li><li>11:30am Battle Ready WR/DD</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6pm Scouts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7am Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)</li><li>9am Quilt Ladies-FH</li><li>7pm Compassionate Friends</li></ul>	<div>Bulletin Items Due 9AM</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>8:30am Chapel</li><li>9:30am Wednesday Bible Study</li><li>1pm Safety Team Meeting</li><li>6pm Midweek Contemplative Service</li></ul>	8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6:30pm Pastor's Bible Study-Zoom</li></ul>	9	10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7:30am Open Gym</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9am Divine Service</li><li>10:30am Battle Ready Modules</li><li>10:30am Education Hour</li><li>11:30am Battle Ready WR/DD</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6pm Scouts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7am Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)</li><li>9am Quilt Ladies-FH</li><li>6pm Elders Meeting</li><li>6pm Elders' Meeting</li></ul>	<div>Bulletin Items Due 9AM</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>8:30am Chapel</li><li>9:30am Wednesday Bible Study</li><li>6pm Midweek Contemplative Service</li></ul>	15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1:30pm LWML Dorcas Circle (Library)</li><li>3:15pm Finance Action Team Meeting</li><li>6:30pm Pastor's Bible Study-Zoom</li></ul>	16 Youth Night	17 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7:30am Open Gym</li><li>10am Veteran Potluck ?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9am Divine Service</li><li>10:30am Battle Ready Modules</li><li>10:30am Education Hour</li><li>11:30am Battle Ready WR/DD</li><li>12:30pm Council Meeting</li></ul>	<div>No School</div> <div>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6pm Scouts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7am Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)</li><li>9am Quilt Ladies-FH</li><li>1pm LWML Ruth Circle (Fellowship Hall)</li><li>6:30pm LWML Lydia Circle (Library)</li></ul>	<div>Bulletin Items Due 9AM</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>8:30am Chapel</li><li>9:30am Wednesday Bible Study</li><li>6pm Midweek Contemplative Service</li></ul>	22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6:30pm Pastor's Bible Study-Zoom</li></ul>	23 Newsletter Due	24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7:30am Open Gym</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9am Divine Service</li><li>9am Students Sing In Church</li><li>10:30am Battle Ready Modules</li><li>10:30am Education Hour</li><li>11:30am Battle Ready WR/DD</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6pm Scouts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7am Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)</li><li>9am Quilt Ladies-FH</li></ul>	<div>Bulletin Items Due 9AM</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>8:30am Chapel</li><li>9:30am Wednesday Bible Study</li><li>6pm Midweek Contemplative Service</li></ul>	29 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10am Sew Blessed Quilters</li><li>5pm Family Night</li><li>6:30pm Pastor's Bible Study-Zoom</li></ul>	30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10am Sew Blessed Quilters</li></ul>	31 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7:30am Open Gym</li><li>10am Sew Blessed Quilters</li></ul>