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From the Organ Bench



Advent Season is a very special time of year that sometimes gets lost in the bright lights of the Christmas season it precedes. The first day of Advent is the first day of a new Liturgical (or church) calendar and begins a four week period of preparation for the nativity of Jesus Christ at Christmas.

The Advent Season is all about reflecting on how we can prepare our hearts and homes for Christ's birth in the world as it is today. It is a time for faith communities and families to remember, through prayer, reflections, special music, and good deeds what the true meaning of Jesus' birth is.

The Advent season invites us to step away from what can be a frenzied time of parties, shopping, and holiday noise to consider how we remember the birth of Jesus, one of the holiest times in Christian faith. It is also a time to reflect on the triumphant return of Jesus at the second coming.

This year we are going to use a hymn that we haven't sung for a number of years, AND learn a new hymn.

The first hymn is *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*, WOV 630. Each week **before** we sing the psalm, we will sing the appropriate verse while the advent wreath is lit. Advent 1, verse 1, Advent 2, verse 2, and so on. On the fourth Sunday in Advent we will sing the fourth and last verse before we sing the psalm. I've mentioned this to a few people and they were eager to sing this hymn once again.



Next is learning a new hymn. During the Advent season we will learn a new hymn. We will sing it each of the four weeks in Advent, somewhere in the liturgy. The hymn is LBW 27, *Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending*. Interestingly, this is the only Advent hymn we have not learned to sing in both the LBW and WOV.



At first glance it seems confusing. The hymn sounds more like a Lenten hymn than an Advent hymn. It talks about events of Lent and Easter. BUT, Advent is also about the second coming of Christ. We remember both the arrival of Baby Jesus and then Second coming of Christ. Don't worry if you are confused at this point. You are not alone.



We know that Christ was born, ministered to the people of the earth, was crucified, died and was raised. He ascended into heaven and we await His return. This hymn covers all of that and maybe gives us a different perspective on this Advent.

Soli Deo Gloria!

2023 Congregation Council

- Brenda Beegle**, *President, Christian Ed. co-chair*
Nick Adams, *Vice President, Christian Ed co-chair, and Personnel chair*
Karen Zivic, *Secretary*
Ernestine Batdorf, *Finance Secretary*
Michael Ernst
Deborah Lutz, *Publicity and Volunteer Resources chair*
David Machamer, *Evangelism and Property chair*
- Non Council Committee Chairs and their positions:**
Karen Fox, *Worship & Music chair*
Karen Hatt, *Fellowship Chair*
Kathaleen Lilley, *Assistant Treasurer and Finance Chair*
Rita Savant, *Assistant Finance Secretary and Social Ministry Chair*
Nancie Whelan, *Treasurer*

December 24 Worship



4th Sunday in Advent
 at 10:30 AM

The Nativity of Our Lord
 at 4 PM

*A liturgy of Holy Communion, carols
 and candle lighting*



Staff Christmas Gifts

Christmas is coming, and our custom has been to request donations towards gifts for our staff members (Robin, Karen, Erin, and Alyssa). As you know, there has been a deficit in congregation giving for the past several years, and we are not able to budget an appropriate amount for our employees. Please help us to give each of our employees a generous Christmas gift. Please give your contribution to any Council member or officer (see list to the left).



Cash is preferred. Please do NOT give a check on Christmas Eve. We cannot divide it in time to include it in the envelopes. Thank you!

Brenda Beegle
 Congregation Council President

Weekly Worship Schedule

9 AM Living in Faith Education Hour
 10:30 AM The Holy Communion

E-mail

Brenda Beegle: diamonds3158@gmail.com
 Robin Harris/office: messiahluthleb@epix.net

Web Site

<http://www.messiahluthleb.org>
 Atlantic Mission Region: www.atlantic-nalc.org
 NALC: www.thenalc.org

Prayers Ascending

In the name of Jesus, we prayed for you this past Sunday (October 22) from Camp Hill, PA. May Our Lord Jesus Christ bless you and your ministry!

Yours in Christ,
 St. Timothy's Prayer Ministry
 Camp Hill, PA



December 2023 Schedules

Assisting Minister

- 3 Eugene Martin
- 10 Nicholas Adams
- 17 Kathaleen Lilley
- 24 Deborah Lutz
- 24 4 PM Nancie Whelan
- 31 Charlotte Varone



Lector

- 3 Carey Kendall
- 10 Nicholas Adams
- 17 Kathaleen Lilley
- 24 Deborah Lutz
- 24 4 PM Nancie Whelan
- 31 Charlotte Varone



Greeters

- 3 Deborah Lutz
- 10 **NEEDED**
- 17 **NEEDED**
- 24 Harry & Karen Hatt
- 24 4 PM Harry & Karen Hatt
- 31 **NEEDED**



Counting Teams

- 3 Team 2
- 10 Team 3
- 17 Team 4
- 24 Team 1
- 24 4 PM Team 2
- 31 Team 3



Altar Guild

- Deborah Lutz, chair
- Carol Anspach
- Raymond Anspach



Crucifer

- 3 Andrew Surmacz
- 10 Kathaleen Lilley
- 17 Sandra Smith
- 24 Eugene Martin
- 24 4 PM Mary Whelan
- 31 Gayle Hoffman



Acolyte

- 3 Nancie Whelan
- 10 Karen Hatt
- 17 Harry Hatt
- 24 Deborah Lutz
- 24 4 PM Deborah Lutz
Karen Zivic
- 31 Nancie Whelan



USHERS



Head Ushers
Raymond & Carol Anspach

WELCOME TIME Sponsors

(Welcome Time is held the first Sunday of month at 9:30 AM.)



December 3—Cookies provided by the congregation

Lessons & Carols Planned



Christmas will soon be here!

Last year Christmas was on a Sunday, and instead of the regular liturgy we had Lessons and Carols. This year, by popular input, we will once again have Lessons and Carols on **December 31**, the First Sunday after Christmas.

We invite you to place a slip of paper with your Christmas carol request in the basket on the organ up to Sunday, December 17, the 3rd Sunday in Advent. This will give us time to work your

requests into the liturgy for that day.

Thank you for your suggestions. Please remember: The carols you choose **must be** in either the **LBW** (green hymnal) or **WOV** (the blue hymnal). Any hymns requested that are NOT in one of these hymnals will not be used due to copyright issues. Thank you for your input!



Soli Deo Gloria!!

Hymn of the Month!

Get ready to learn a new hymn!

LBW 27 *Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending*



Ministry Plan Summary for October

(Budgeted need per week: \$2,820.44)

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Offering Received:</u>	<u>Attendance:</u>
10/1	\$2,985.00	no LiF / 30 +
10/8	\$1,301.00	10 LiF / 29 +
10/15	\$761.00	12 LiF / 31 +
10/22	\$2,515.00	13 LiF / 35 +
10/29	\$1,695.40	8 LiF / 30 +

NOTE: "+" denotes Worship
"LiF" denotes Living in Faith



November Congregation Council Meeting Highlights

The Messiah Congregation Council met on Tuesday, November 14, 2023.

- Financial reports were approved pending audit.
- Committee reports were given and approved.
- A devotional time will be added to Welcome Time.
- The Tree of Giving will be collecting items for the Agape House.



Respectfully submitted,
 Karen Zivic
 Congregation Council Secretary

Decorating Schedule

The Altar Guild will prepare the nave for the beginning of the liturgical calendar with Advent set up on Saturday, December 2 at 9 AM. All are welcome to help in the fellowship. Light refreshments will be provided.

As we prepare for Sunday, December 24 (4th Sunday of Advent at 10:30 AM and the Nativity of Our Lord at 4 PM), the Altar Guild will set up the candelabras and poinsettias on Saturday, December 23 at 9 AM. The outside Nativity and luminaries will also be set up at this time. Any and all help is greatly appreciated!



Cookies!!!

A BIG thank you to all who baked cookies this past month for the Fellowship Committee to take to our older members for Christmas. We had plenty of cookies (and a nice variety). The cookies that were not packed in containers will be shared during December's Welcome Time, and the rest will be taken to the Agape House when the Social Ministry Committee delivers the Tree of Giving gifts. THANK YOU!



Karen Hatt
 Fellowship Committee Chair

Wintry Weather...



In the event of wintry weather or power outages on Sunday mornings, please **check your email or wait for a phone call** to relay the message that church is cancelled. If there is a power failure on a Sunday morning, worship will be held in the Fellowship Hall. The emergency generator provides enough light in that area.

Also, in the event of adverse weather/road conditions during the week, the office will open as soon as conditions allow us to travel safely.



Membership Change

Please **amend your directory** to reflect she who joined the Church Triumphant last month:



Janet Grun
 1932—2023

If we have died with Christ, we shall also live with Him; if we are faithful to the end, we shall reign with Him.

December Birthdays

- 5 Holly McGuire
Walter Shirey
- 7 Eileen Lutz
- 8 Andrew Hartman
- 9 Barbara Adams
Susan Galbraith
- 18 Alyson Hartman
- 24 Donald Munford
- 25 Mikayla Bowman
- 26 Beckett Lutz
- 31 Gary Dohner
Kathy Sanders



It's a Girl!



Congratulations to Alyssa Knouff, big sister Alivia (and to grandparents Rick and Pam Knouff) on the birth of

Callahan "Callie" Jo Knouff.

Callie was born on November 14, 2023. She weighed in at 7 lbs. 11 oz. and was 19.75" long. May God richly bless this growing family.

December Anniversaries

- 6 Barry & Brenda Beegle



2023 Contributions

YEAR-END
GIVING



ALL year-end contributions **must be received by the last Sunday of the month (December 31)** to count for 2023. All contributions received after that date will be recorded for 2024.

Christmas Office Hours



The office will be **closed** on December 25 & 26.

Merry Christmas!

Thank You Note

Words cannot express the depth of gratitude I feel towards this congregation—my other Church Family—for the incredible amount of love and support following the death of my husband Bennett in October.

The number of cards received, food brought, and help offered was incredible. There were so many of you at the viewing and funeral. I cannot tell you how much that meant to me and to my whole family to have that support.

Lily and I are settling in to a new routine. It's different, but so far it is working. Thank you for the prayers—we're going to need them, especially in the coming teen years.

May the Lord bless all of you as abundantly as you have blessed us.

—Robin Harris

2024 Offering Envelopes

Offering Envelopes The 2024 offering envelopes have arrived. Please take yours home with you at your earliest convenience. If you live close to a shut-in, please consider helping us out by delivering their envelopes too. Please note that the envelopes are arranged in **ALPHABETICAL** order. Thank you.



Messiah Lutheran 2024 Ministry Plan

	2024	2023	Net Change	Percent Change
Staff Ministries				
Pastor Salary & Housing (2/3 Part-time)	42,700	41,440	1,261	3.04%
			0	
Pastor's Social Security Allowance	3,730	3,170	560	17.67%
Car Allowance	2,600	2,600	0	0.00%
Pension	5,539	5,353	186	3.47%
Medical/Dental/Disability/Survivor Insurance	18,000	18,000	0	0.00%
Pastor's Continuing Ed	600	600	0	0.00%
Office Manager Salary	16,848	13,357	3,491	26.14%
Office Manager Social Security	1,290	1,023	267	26.11%
Workers Compensation Insurance	800	700	100	14.29%
TOTAL	92,107	86,242	5,865	6.80%
Percent of Total Plan	63.93%	64.12%		
Administrative Ministries				
Consumable Supplies	1,500	1,500	0	0.00%
Technology Support	600	0	600	600.00%
Non-Consumable Supplies	100	100	0	0.00%
Postage	100	100	0	0.00%
Worship Supplies	500	500	0	0.00%
Telephone & Internet	1,600	1,500	100	6.67%
Offering Supplies	350	350	0	0.00%
NALC/AMR Convocations	1,500	1,500	0	0.00%
TOTAL	6,250	5,550	700	12.61%
Percent of Total Plan	4.34%	4.13%		
Maintenance Ministries				
Electric	9,000	9,000	0	0.00%
Gas	4,500	3,500	1,000	28.57%
Water & Sewer	1,000	900	100	11.11%
Refuse Removal	550	400	150	37.50%
Equipment Service	4,000	4,000	0	0.00%
Grounds Care	4,400	4,400	0	0.00%
Facilities Services (Contractor)	0	0	0	0.00%
Snow Removal	1,800	1,800	0	0.00%
Janitorial - Non-paper Supplies	325	325	0	0.00%
Janitorial - Paper Supplies	200	200	0	0.00%
Property & Liability Insurance	6,500	6,500	0	0.00%
Organ/Piano Tuning/Repairs	1,300	1,300	0	0.00%
Chesapeake Bay Stormwater Runoff	500	500	0	0.00%
TOTAL	34,075	32,825	1,250	3.81%
Percent of Total Plan	23.65%	24.40%		

The 2024 Ministry Plan was approved by those members in attendance at Messiah's Annual Meeting held on November 18, 2024.

Messiah Lutheran 2024 Ministry Plan

	2024	2023	Net Change	Percent Change
Committee Ministries				
Publicity/Advertising	100	100	0	0.00%
Christian Ed	450	450	0	0.00%
Evangelism	50	50	0	0.00%
Fellowship	25	25	0	0.00%
Social Ministry	40	40	0	0.00%
Stewardship	50	50	0	0.00%
Youth Ministry	50	50	0	0.00%
TOTAL	765	765	0	0.00%
Percent of Total Plan	0.53%	0.57%		
Additional Ministries				
Speakers & Substitutes	2,000	5 240	1,760	733.33%
Organist Substitutes	8,850	8,850	0	0.00%
Pastoral Care Resources	0	0	0	0.00%
Awards & Gifts	30	30	0	0.00%
VBS	0	0	0	0.00%
Library	0	0	0	0.00%
TOTAL	10,880	9,120	1,760	19.30%
Percent of Total Plan	7.55%	6.78%		
General Fund Total	144,077	134,502	9,575	7.12%
Benevolence Ministries				
NALC Benevolence	8,400	8,040	360	4.48%
Other Benevolence	4,700	4,020	680	16.92%
TOTAL	13,100	12,060	1,040	8.62%

* Total Benevolence Commitment: The congregation's tithe that is designated as this congregation's benevolence support will consist of 10% of offerings received in regular giving envelopes and other benevolences as specifically determined by Congregation Council.

GRAND TOTAL	157,177	146,562	10,615	7.24%
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Addendum to the Ministry Plan	
AMR Purchase of Admin Services	
AMR Admin Salary Reimburse	20,000
AMR Admin Social Security Reimburse	1,530
AMR - Health Benefits Contribution	3,600
AMR Purchase of Admin Services	25,130

This addendum has been added below the 2024 Ministry Plan to show the amount of money the congregation will receive from the AMR for the purchasing of administrative services from Messiah. Congregation Council approved the purchasing of administrative services from Messiah at a specially called Council meeting on Sunday, October 24, 2023.

Notes for 2024 Ministry Plan

1. Pastor's salary and housing line item amounts were increased by 3%, which also increases Pastor's Social Security line item.
2. The committee has proposed \$18.00/hour for the Office Manager's salary. Robin was only getting paid \$14.00/hour after 13 years of service, so the new rate better reflects her years of service and her responsibilities. The Social Security line item increases as a result of the increased salary.
3. Technology support was reinstated for this coming year, which reflects services purchased for upgrading Messiah's Website.
4. The increases for each of these line items reflect the increased costs because of inflation.
5. The Speakers & Substitutes line item is increased to reflect the continued need for supply pastors.
6. **Benevolence Breakdown for 2024:** The Benevolence line item was increased to better reflect the 10% tithe of the congregation. The Council recommends the following benevolence amounts for 2024 as follows:
 1. NALC - \$8400 per year or \$700 each month (6.65%)
 2. Atlantic Mission District - \$1200.00 per year or \$100 per month (.9%)
 3. NALC Partner Ministries (\$500 - divided \$125.00 per quarter (.35%)):
 - a. Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries
 - b. The Great Commission Society
 - c. Water Missions International
 - d. Lutheran Bible Translators
 4. North American Lutheran Seminary-- (\$500 - divided \$125.00 per quarter) (.35%)
 5. Independent Church in India -- (\$500 - divided \$125.00 per quarter) (.35%)
 6. Caring Cupboard - (\$500 - divided \$125.00 per quarter) (.35%)
 7. Lebanon Free Clinic - (\$500 - divided \$95.00 \$125.00 per quarter) (.35%)
 8. Lebanon Rescue/Agape - (\$500 - divided \$125.00 per quarter) (.35%)
 9. City of Lebanon (in lieu of taxes) - (\$500 - divided \$125.00 per quarter) (.35%)

TOTAL Estimated Benevolence Giving: \$13,100 (represents 10% of 2024 estimated giving)**

Please note: Lutheran World Relief - has been removed from benevolence giving because it is no longer recognized as a ministry partner of the NALC. The delegates and clergy at the NALC Convocation in Oklahoma voted to stop sending funds to LWR because of its position supporting abortion.

** In December of each year, the treasurer and assistant treasurer will review offerings given for the year to determine if there are additional offerings to send to each organization based upon the congregation's 10.00% tithe. The additional offerings will be divided according to the percentages listed above and sent to each organization with the December check.