

“Growing God’s Kingdom”



FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS SERVICE OF HEALING

December 31st, 2017
MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Messiah Lutheran Church

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The Rev. Chris Mathiason
Stephen Rodgers
June Bricker
Andrea Cameron
Diana Wise
Linda Clark & Diana Wise
Haley Mummah & Hannah Ehrisman

Interim Pastor
Lay Worship Leader
Organist
Choir Director
Lector
Altar Guild
Acolytes

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS SERVICE OF HEALING December 31, 2017 – 10:30 a.m.

*Please Stand as **YOU** Are Able

PEOPLE TO REMEMBER IN PRAYER TODAY

Those we want to remember in prayer today—please refer to “Prayers of Intercession.”

PREPARATION

CHIMES: CALL TO WORSHIP

PRELUDE: He is Born Robert Lau

[A Time for Meditation and Prayer]

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

In the psalm all the natural world praises God, including all humanity, male and female, young and old. The voices of Simeon and 84-year-old Anna join the chorus today, recognizing what God is doing in Jesus. Simeon's song is often sung after communion, for we have seen God's salvation in the assembled community and have held Jesus in our hands in the bread. Then, like the prophet Anna, we speak of Jesus to all who look for the healing of the world.

* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the Holy One of Israel, the Word made flesh, the Power of the Most High, + one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

P Gathered in the name of Jesus, let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P Gracious God,

C in Christ Jesus you come among us as light shining in darkness. We confess our failure to welcome this light. Forgive us and renew our hope, so that we may live in the light of your grace, and welcome the truth of Christ the Lord. Amen.

P I bring you good news of great joy for all the people: To you is born a Savior, Christ the Lord. Your sins are forgiven in + Jesus' name.

C Amen.

GATHERING

* ENTRANCE HYMN "Joy to the World" #39 Green Hymnal

* GREETING

P Today Christ is born: Alleluia, alleluia! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

* KYRIE

P Lord, have mercy upon us. **C** Lord, have mercy upon us.

P Christ, have mercy upon us. **C** Christ, have mercy upon us.

P Lord, have mercy upon us. **C** Lord, have mercy upon us.

"Away in a Manger" (verse 1)

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

P Lord, have mercy upon us. **C** Lord, have mercy upon us.

P Christ, have mercy upon us. **C** Christ, have mercy upon us.

P Lord, have mercy upon us. **C** Lord, have mercy upon us.

* HYMN OF PRAISE (to the tune of "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee")

1 Glory be to God in heaven; peace, good will to all the earth.
Mighty God of all creation, Father of surpassing worth:
we exalt you, we adore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
Saints and angels bow before you; here on earth our songs we raise.

2 Glory be to Christ forever, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
Son of God and gracious Savior, you have come from heav'n above;
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
Hear our prayer; restore, forgive us; in your promise firm we stand.

3 Holy One we now acclaim you; Lord alone, to you we call;
Holy One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:
Jesus Christ, with God the Spirit, in the Father's splendor bright.
For the peace that we inherit, glory be to God on high!

* SALUTATION AND RESPONSE (spoken)

P The Lord be with you

C And also with you.

* PRAYER OF THE DAY (spoken in unison)

P Let us pray...

C **Almighty God, you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WORD

To the people who returned to Jerusalem after the exile, the prophet proclaims that the Lord's salvation will fully come to pass. Jerusalem will become a shining light to the nations and righteousness and praise will spring up as surely as the earth puts forth vegetation.

FIRST READING

A reading from Isaiah 61:10—62:3

THE LESSON READS:

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

^{62:1}For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. ²The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. ³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Lector: Here ends the reading.

Cong: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 148

Ps. – Read Responsively

Response – Sung by Congregation

R O Come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

¹Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise God in the heights.

²**Praise the LORD, all you angels; sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

³Praise the LORD, sun and moon; sing praise, all you shining stars.

⁴**Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.**

⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD, who commanded, and they were created,
⁶**who made them stand fast forever and ever, giving them a law that shall not pass away. R**
⁷Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps;
⁸**fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**
⁹mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;
¹⁰**wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds;**
¹¹sovereigns of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;
¹²**young men and maidens, old and young together. R**
¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD, whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.
¹⁴**The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD. Hallelujah! R**

Paul seeks to show the Galatians that the purpose of Christ's birth was to liberate us from the law's condemnation so that we would be fully adopted into God's family as sons and daughters.

SECOND READING

A reading from Galatians 4:4-7

THE LESSON READS:

⁴But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,
⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.
⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"
⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Lector: Here ends the reading.

Cong: Thanks be to God.

- * THE VERSE "Joy to the World" (vs. 1)
 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;
 let ev'ry heart prepare him room
 and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing,
 and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Luke's narrative continues with stories that emphasize Jesus' connection to Judaism. His family is devout in its observance of the law, and Jesus himself is recognized as one who will bring glory to Israel.

- * GOSPEL: Luke 2:22-40

P The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 2nd chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord. (spoken)

THE GOSPEL READS:

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Joseph and Mary] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, ²⁹"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." ³³And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ. (spoken)**

SERMON

Stephen Rodgers

* HYMN OF THE DAY

"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

#55 Green Hymnal

* NICENE CREED (all)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.

Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*** PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P Drawn near to God as children and heirs of Christ's promise, we pray for all people of God, for our nation and our world, and for those in need.

A brief silence.

P For the faith communities of this town and for faith communities throughout the world. Help us to see ourselves in our neighbors, especially those who differ from us, and draw us together in common service to those who are hungry, poor, and oppressed. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P For the well-being of the earth as we begin another year entrusted with its care. Give us lively imaginations to see ways to conserve its limited resources, harness its renewable energies, and conform ourselves to its natural goodness. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P For peace among nations, for peace in our homes, and for peace in our hearts. Urge us to cry out at injustice and inequality among your people until vindication comes and righteousness prevails. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P For those who wait in the shadow of death, for those who are ill, for those who struggle to see the future, and for all who lack even their basic needs. We pray especially for all of our shut-ins: Reba Sigler, Kitty Walters, Jane Marhefka, Ruth Cisney, Ray Bramm, Dottie Smith, Dorothy Cleck, Carol Simonton, Lura Aughey, Mona Lawson, Sara Ann Aurand, Betty Karstetter, and Jim Yetter. And for Bob & Jeanette St. Clair, Avonel & Rick Waller, Sr., Jim Woltman, Bob & Andrea Cameron, Mary Ernest, John Miller, Randy Clark, Joan Fulkroad, Don Clark, Tom Lyter, Butch & Sandy Pines, Joyce Bradley, Minnie Minick, Dr. Laurie Cox, Pat Forney, Bob Bell, Megan Hart, Austin Parker, Terry Coder, John Towsey, Barbara Wengerd, Audrey Peters, Rich Walters, Jim Gilson, Jane Cleck, Cynthia Taylor, Glenn Compton, Sieber Stoner, Mary Sanders, Ann Baney, Leon Kramer, and Don Lewis (now at Valley View Retirement Community). Transform our love toward them with the vision of eyes that have seen the salvation of God. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P For those who cannot see, for those who cannot hear, for those who have varied use of their limbs, and for those able to exercise all the senses. Help us to appreciate the

fullness of God's gift of life in our varied abilities, and to celebrate the diversity that reveals a more complete image of the one who makes us all family. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

P Lord of the Church, we give thanks to you for your death and resurrection, and that you are the Good Shepherd. Hear our prayer for our Call Committee and its work of discernment, and hear our prayer for your sending to us a pastor who will be a strong partner with us in the joy and service of your Gospel for those within your Church and those beyond our walls in this community. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P We give thanks for those who have gone before us in this year and now rest in you. Led by Mary and Joseph, Anna and Simeon, let us live in your praise until the day we depart in your peace. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Into your outstretched arms, O God, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Jesus Christ, the light and life of the world.

C Amen.

THE RITE OF HEALING

THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

P Those who wish to receive the laying on of hands as a commitment to God's power to heal may come down the center aisle in two lines to the right and left of the altar. This may include those in need of physical, emotional, or mental healing. It may include those in need of reconciliation in their relationship to God or neighbor. It may include those who wish to commit their ministry of healing into the hands of God: as a doctor, nurse or health care worker.

P Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation. We give you thanks for this oil, for the fruit of the trees, nurtured in the warmth of the sun, watered from the rain of the heavens, the olives harvested, and oil pressed from the fruit of the trees. With oil, you anointed your chosen people Israel, and fed them with choice flour, oil, and honey. You anointed Aaron and made oil a sign of blessing for your chosen ones. You promised to anoint with oil those who walk through the valley of the shadow of death. You have anointed your own Son with the oil of gladness. The Good Samaritan tended a stranger, bound up his wounds, and poured oil on them. You gave the disciples power to heal, to cure, and to anoint with oil many who were sick. Your own body was anointed for burial by the woman who poured expensive ointment on his feet and wiped them with her hair. The virgins met the bridegroom and trimmed their oil lamps to burn brightly for the celebration, the feast to come.

(Then for each individual the following is said with the laying on of hands):

P I lay my hands upon you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, beseeching him to uphold you and fill you with grace, that you may know the healing power of his love.

C Amen.

P (Name), I anoint you with oil in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

* PRAYER OF COMMITMENT (for all)

P The almighty Lord a stronger tower to all who put their trust in him, to whom all things in heaven, on earth, and under the earth bow and whom they obey—be now and evermore your defense, and make you know and feel that the only name under heaven given for health and salvation is the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

* PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P Let us pray.

Merciful Lord God, constant source of all healing, we give you thanks for all your gifts of strength and life, and above all we thank you for the gift of your Son, through whom we have health and salvation. As we wait for that day when there will be no more pain, help us by your Holy Spirit to be assured of your power in our lives and to trust in your eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

* SHARING OF GOD’S PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

Congregational sharing: **“Peace be with you.”**

OFFERING

OFFERTORY:

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Robert Lau

ANTHEM:

Only a Baby Came

Natalie Sleeth

[Please pass the Friendship Pad down your pew for all to sign and then back to the center aisle so everyone has the opportunity to read the names. We request that our guests also give us their home address. Thank you].

* SUNG OFFERTORY “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (verse 1)

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!

Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

* OFFERING PRAYER

P God with us: You came as a baby to a manger. You slept on straw and greeted shepherds. You come again in bread and wine. Remind us how good you are at blessing ordinary things. And then, through these gifts, help us to bless the lives of others in the strength of your holy name.

C Amen.

MEAL

* COMMUNION DIALOG (from Isaiah 55)

P Let us give thanks to the Lord.

C for through these gifts he comes to feed us.

P All you who are thirsty, come to the waters. You who have no money, come, receive bread, and eat.

C Come, without paying and without cost, drink wine and eat.

P Let us come to his table with joy,

C for we come as God's invited guests!

* EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P We give you thanks, Father, through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, whom you sent in this end of the ages to save and redeem us and to proclaim to us your will.

He is your Word, inseparable from you, through whom you created all things, and in whom you take delight. He is your Word, sent from heaven to a virgin's womb. He there took on our nature and our lot and was shown forth as your Son, born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary. He, our Lord Jesus, fulfilled all your will and won for you a holy people; he stretched out his hands in suffering in order to free from suffering those who trust you.

He is the one who, handed over to a death he freely accepted, in order to destroy death, to break the bonds of the evil one, to crush hell underfoot, to give light to the righteous, to establish his covenant, and to show forth the resurrection, taking bread and giving thanks to you, said: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

In the same way he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, then, his death and resurrection, we take this bread and cup, giving you thanks that you have made us worthy to stand before you and to serve you as your priestly people.

Send your Spirit upon these gifts of your church; gather into one all who share this bread and wine; fill us with your Holy Spirit to establish our faith in truth, that we may praise and glorify you through your Son Jesus Christ; through whom all glory and

honor are yours, almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, both now and forever.

C Amen.

* THE LORD'S PRAYER ['trespasses'] (all)

C Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.
Amen.**

* INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Joy to the world! The Lord is come. Let every heart receive your Savior.

(If you desire, you may take a gluten free wafer located on the oak pedestal on the step in front of the chancel).

DISTRIBUTION:

["INTINCTION" – dip your wafer in the wine. Come forward by the center aisle and return by the side aisle. All who wish to stand at the chancel rail after partaking for a time of silent meditation are invited to do so].

* COMMUNION BLESSING

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen.

* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P On this day, O God, you gave us Christ the Son to save us. As you sent the one foretold, send us now with good news for all people. Let the gladness of this feast have no end as we share with others the joy that fills us; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

SENDING

* BLESSING

P May Christ, who by his incarnation has filled us with grace and truth, give you peace this Christmas and always. Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C A-men, A-men, A-men. (sung)

* CLOSING HYMN “Go Tell It on the Mountain” #70 Green Hymnal

* DISMISSAL

P Glory to God in the highest!

C Peace to God’s people on earth!

P Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE:

Now Sing We, Now Rejoice

Paul Manz

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Next Week’s Lector – Cynthia Smith

Next Week’s Altar Guild – Kay Varner

Next Week’s Lay Worship Leader – Stephen Rodgers

Next Week’s Acolytes – Hannah Ehrisman & Julia Martin

WELCOME

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME to worship at Messiah. We invite you to register your visit not only in the Friendship Pads but also in the guest book provided in the Narthex. If you are seeking a church home, please speak to the Pastor or indicate such in the Friendship Pads being sure to include your contact information. Our fellowship in Jesus Christ is open and extended to all persons who confess His Lordship over all life. Thank you for worshipping with us.

VISITORS ARE INVITED TO COMMUNE with us if they are baptized, and if with us in our faith, they trust Jesus’ promise of the presence of the Body and Blood of Christ.

GLUTEN FREE WAFERS ARE ALSO PROVIDED FOR COMMUNION. Wine and wheat wafers are used and if you so desire, you may take a gluten free wafer located on the oak pedestal on the step in front of the chancel.

IF YOU WISH TO USE OR FOLLOW THE LITURGY MUSIC as we proceed through the service today, please use the blue portfolios placed on top of the sound control system. In addition, headsets are available in the Narthex for our sound enhancement system for the hearing impaired.

WE INVITE EVERYONE (members and visitors) worshipping with us today to sign the Friendship Pads during the Organ Offertory. If you are a visitor, please be sure to include your address when signing. Please also place a check mark in the box (beside your name) if you are communing today and have not as yet given us a record of your participation in the sacrament during this quarter. (A new quarter begins in January, April, July, and October). The pads are found on the aisle seat of each pew in the nave, and in each section of the Adult Sunday School Room.

WE EXTEND OUR SYMPATHY to Leon Kramer and family on the death of his brother, Meade Kramer, who died on December 24, 2017 in Beaver Springs. Please keep Leon and family in your prayers.

THIS MORNING WE ARE LED IN WORSHIP by Stephen Rodgers an Authorized Lay Worship Leader of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Authorized Lay Worship Leaders have received extensive training so as to provide worship leadership and preaching, and also have been authorized by the bishop of the synod to preside at the Eucharist in specific situations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is committed to ordained ministry as the primary means for filling the needs of this church for Word and Sacrament, but at this place in the

church's pilgrimage, the church's inability to provide all congregations with full-time ordained pastoral ministry presents a challenge. On any given Sunday, congregations have needs that cannot be met by available ordained ministers. Therefore, because it is the bishop's responsibility to meet the Word and Sacrament needs of the congregations in this synod, synodically authorized lay worship leaders are trained to meet this need. On behalf of the whole church, Bishop Collins is deeply gratified by the ministry of these servants of the Gospel.

JUST A THOUGHT – Allister McGrath, Anglican Priest and Theologian (b. 1953): The means by which we are justified is faith. Faith is like a channel through which the benefits of Christ flow to us. We are not justified on account of our faith, it is the work of Christ not our faith which is the foundation of justification. Faith itself is a gift of God.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

PRAYER REQUESTS will be placed in the Sunday bulletin for **one month**. If you wish to have someone included in the prayer list for an additional month, please contact the church office at 436-6213 or messiahlutheran@pa.net. If you have anyone who is a “last minute” addition after the bulletin has been printed on Fridays, please fill out an orange prayer card in the pew and lay it on the stand where the gluten free wafers are placed PRIOR to the morning worship service.

PLEASE NOTIFY THE CHURCH OFFICE for any change in addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, or for any requests for building usage. There are a lot of activities and some coordination is needed so events are not “overbooked” in any specific areas of the church (this also applies to church groups who meet in the church). Please contact the office at 436-6213 or email messiahlutheran@pa.net for any changes or requests.

REQUEST from the Board of Worship & Music: In light of our congregation's recent acceptance of Messiah's Mission Statement (including “....making disciples of Christ through Fellowship....”), we invite more of the congregation to sit in the main sanctuary during the worship service. Unifying everyone into one space will help make us more welcoming to all members and visitors as well as creating a sense of community, sharing and togetherness. Worship Leaders will be able to better “connect” and “communicate” to all worshipers (and you to them) during the service. Other benefits include better sound while singing hymns, listening to the sermons/anthems/special music and an easier time of “Sharing the Peace.” Also, give us your feedback regarding the removal of several rows of pews in the sanctuary and replacing them with soft chairs. Thanks for making this positive transition to your worship experience!

PASTOR CHRIS WILL BE ON VACATION December 26th through January 1st. Pastor Charlie Hershberger will be available for emergencies. He can be reached at Port Royal Lutheran Church at 717-527-4581 or at his home at 717-248-3420.

THE DEADLINE for all items to be included in the Sunday bulletin is **Thursday noon**.

HOME COMMUNION NEEDS HELP – The Compassionate Services Committee is again looking for at least two people who would like to give communion to our shut-ins. A rotating schedule of our shut-ins will be used on a quarterly basis. Training is available. Complete Home Communion kits are also available, including all liturgy needed. If interested in this important ministry, contact Don Geedey at 717-436-6433 or geedey@centurylink.net.

A FIRST COMMUNION CLASS will be held for any youth who are interested. Parents may contact the church office at 717-436-6213 or Sam Leister at 717-436-8589. A date and time will be set based on those who wish to attend.

A BAPTISMAL/NEW MEMBER CLASS will be held for those who are interested. If you wish to have your child baptized, or be baptized yourself, or you wish to attend the New Member Class, please contact the church office or Sam Leister.

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY – Our youth will be holding soup pots at the rear of the church on Super Bowl Sunday, February 4, 2018. They will join young people in churches across the nation, sharing God’s love with those who need our compassion and care. Please support the youth of our church in this effort to “help our neighbors” by dropping a dollar in the soup pot and also by donating a can of soup on February 4th. Proceeds will go to the Juniata County Food Pantry.

THE 2018 CHURCH OFFERING ENVELOPES are now available to pick up in the Library. Anyone who would like a statement of their contributions for 2017 for tax purposes may call the church office and your statement will be mailed to you.

THE NEW FLOWER CHART for 2018 is now in the Adult Sunday School Room. If you wish to place flowers on a specific date, please sign-up on the chart.

MESSIAH’S DOORS will be unlocked at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings for Sunday School and Worship.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED to press quilt tops for “The Needlers.” Tops can be taken home and pressed and brought back to the church. Anyone who is interested, please contact one of “The Needlers.”

WEEKLY FINANCIAL REPORT FOR DECEMBER 24, 2017

Attendance AM Service

Worship Service – 58
 Sunday School – 12

 Total Offering \$4,396.00
 Other Funds \$1,588.00
 General Fund \$2,808.00

Other Funds

Benevolence – \$ 675.00
 Building Fund – \$ 205.00
 Sunday School – \$ 10.00
 Flowers - \$ 8.00
 Memorial Fund - \$ 140.00
 World Hunger - \$ 50.00
 Matthew 25 Fund \$ 500.00
 Total \$ 1,588.00

Attendance Christmas Eve

Worship Service – 119

 Total Offering \$1,123.00
 Other Funds \$ 563.00
 General Fund \$ 560.00

Benevolence - \$ 5.00
 Building Fund - \$ 5.00
 Matthew 25 Fund - \$ 553.00
 Total \$ 563.00

COPIES OF OCTOBER 22, 2017 PPC MINUTES are available in the Adult Sunday School Room.

WEIS AND GIANT GIFT CARDS are available to purchase from the Disciples Class. This is a very important outreach ministry that helps neighbors in need in our own community. We thank each and every one for continued support of this very worthwhile project.

CAN TREE – Donations of gallon-size canned food is again being collected this year through the end of December to benefit Bethesda Mission. Everyone is encouraged to donate as many cans as you are able.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY DELEGATES NEEDED – Two members of Messiah are needed to attend the annual Synod Assembly in June 2018 at Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove. Synod delegates should also plan on attending the Juniata Valley Conference Assembly the 1st Sunday of May. If you are interested in serving, please contact Sam Leister or the church office.

HELP AVAILABLE – If you or someone you know needs help with home repairs or yard work, there are volunteers in our community who may be able to help. For more information, contact Michael “Doc” Johnston at 436-9209.

WEEKLY CHURCH OFFICE HOURS are as follows:

Tuesday – 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Thursday – 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Friday – 12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

THANK YOU to members of Messiah for all of the Christmas cards and notes I received. They were very welcoming and appreciated. Best wishes to everyone for a Happy New Year!

Randy Clark

THANK YOU to the congregation for the Christmas gift I received. Your thoughtfulness was very much appreciated. Blessings to all for the New Year!

Judy Armstrong

THANK YOU to members of Messiah for the Christmas gift. It was very much appreciated.

Dave Phelan

DEAR FRIENDS OF MESSIAH.....thank you so much for the very generous monetary Christmas gift you gave to me. God has blessed me with the opportunity to work with “Messiah’s Kids” throughout the church year, which I truly enjoy. Thank you again—your kindness is very much appreciated. God’s blessings to all of you.

Linda Clark

A HOLIDAY “THANK YOU” to the junior and senior choirs, Andrea Cameron, Judy Armstrong, and the entire congregation for the various gifts given to me this holiday season. It’s a true pleasure and honor to continue to serve my church family at Messiah on many platforms and I cherish each and every one of you. May you all have a blessed and Happy New Year and all of 2018!! The best is yet to come!!

Bob St. Clair

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

NEW BATH-SIZE BARS OF SOAP (4oz. to 5oz., preferably Ivory or unscented Dove) is continuously collected as an on-going project for Lutheran World Relief. Please place soap in the basket on the blue table in the Adult Sunday School Room.

COMMUNITY

JUNIATA COUNTY FOOD PANTRY BASIC NEEDS FOR JANUARY:

ALL NON-PERISHABLE FOODS; TISSUES; TOILET PAPER; OTC PAIN; COLD AND FLU MEDICINES, COUGH DROPS, VICKS. WE ALSO GLADLY ACCEPT DONATIONS OF CASH AND GIFT CARDS TO PURCHASE THESE SUPPLIES

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THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

- Today:** -FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS.
-9:15 a.m., Sunday School/Catechetical Class.
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion/Service of Healing/Jr. Church (Lay Worship Leader: Stephen Rodgers).
- Monday:** -HAPPY NEW YEAR!!
-8:00 p.m., AA meeting in Fellowship Hall.
- Tuesday:** -CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED.
- Sunday:** -BAPTISM OF OUR LORD
-9:15 a.m., Sunday School/Catechetical Class.
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion (Lay Worship Leader: Stephen Rodgers).