

# THE MESSIAH HERALD



**JANUARY 2019**

**MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**3 SOUTH THIRD STREET**

**MIFFLINTOWN, PA 17059**

**(717)-436-6213**

**INTERIM PASTOR -- REV. CHRIS MATHIASON -- [cmathiason001@luthersem.edu](mailto:cmathiason001@luthersem.edu)**

**CHURCH WEBSITE: [www.mlc-mifflintown.org](http://www.mlc-mifflintown.org)**

**OFFICE EMAIL: [mlchurchoffice@gmail.com](mailto:mlchurchoffice@gmail.com)**

**CHURCH TREASURER: [mlchurchtreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:mlchurchtreasurer@gmail.com)**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES! – 9:15 AM**

**WORSHIP, JR. CHURCH, & COMMUNION – 10:30 AM**

***CHILDREN'S SERMONS OFFERED EVERY FIRST AND THIRD SUNDAYS!!***

**[USS-ARK NEWSLETTER](#)**

**[THE LUTHERAN MAGAZINE](#)**

# **"Growing God's Love"**

## The **Messiah Herald**



### **HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL**

Merry Christmas! Happy New Year! How often during these past weeks haven't we heard these greetings? It seemed that everywhere we went people greeted us by saying, "Merry Christmas!" "Have a Happy New Year!" But now that Christmas is over, and the New Year come and gone people no longer use these greetings.

For Christians, especially Gentile Christians like us, Christmas isn't really over. In fact, it has just begun. Sunday, January 6, is Epiphany. Next to Easter, Epiphany is the oldest Christian church festival. It is older than Christmas Day which we celebrated only a while ago. Epiphany is called "The Christmas of the Gentiles."

But Epiphany actually means "to reveal or appear" and in the church we celebrate this festival because God revealed the Light of the World to us. Epiphany marks the coming of the Wise men to see the Christ child. Their coming was recorded in the Gospel. These Wise men were Gentiles. They were non-Jews just like you and me. They had come looking for the One who was born King of the Jews as we heard in the Gospel. When they found the Christ child, they worshipped him. They worshiped him not only as the King of the Jews, but also as their Lord and Savior. The Wise men truly had a Happy New Year. They had found him who is the solution to their greatest problem. They rejoiced because they knew that they were members of God's eternal family. In response to all these great things, the Wise men made use of the opportunity to praise God and to show their love in presenting him with gifts.

For many the greetings "Merry Christmas!" or "Happy New Year" is an empty expression. For them it is just another way of saying, "Hello" or "Good-bye." It doesn't have a whole lot of meaning behind it.

In the words of our text, the prophet uses that same greeting. In essence he says, "Happy New Year to All." Isaiah does more than simply wish that we have a Happy New Year. He tells us why our new year is truly a happy one. We can enjoy the New Year because Our Big Problem Is Solved, and Our Eternal Family Is Growing.

We truly can have a glorious new year because our big problem is solved. Isaiah refers to our big problem when he writes, "See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness the peoples" (Isaiah 50:2).

The darkness the covers the earth is not physical darkness. Isaiah is not referring to this time of the year when there are more hours of darkness than daylight. The darkness the covers the world is the darkness of sin and unbelief. Just as a person in total darkness cannot see a thing, so the people of the world cannot see anything spiritual. They are blinded by sin and unbelief. They don't know that what they are doing is wrong. They don't know that they are headed for an eternity in hell. This is true of every individual that does not know and believes in Jesus Christ.

For all believers this big problem of spiritual darkness has been solved. They are no longer in darkness. To believers Isaiah says, "Arise, shine, for your Light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises like the dawn upon you. The Lord rises like the dawn upon you, and His glory appears over you" (Isaiah 60:1-2)

Isaiah reminds us that our Light has come. In fact, the Light of the world has come. The one who dispels the great darkness of sin and unbelief is here. The one who does this is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus himself said, "I am the Light of the world, whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

As we look at the life of Jesus, hear his words, see his miracles, we come to the same conclusion that John did. The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth... In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness. [John 1:14, 4-5]

When we think of seeing the glory of the Lord in Christ, we perhaps think of his transfiguration. There on

the mountain, the glory of his divinity shown through his clothing and was evident on his face. But the glory of the Lord was evident also in his living among us, his fulfilling of the law in our place, his complete work of salvation by giving up his life on the cross for you and me, and his sending of the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts, the seal that guarantees we are God's children and heirs of eternal life.

Jesus has lightened up our lives. He has lightened our path taking us out of the darkness of sin and unbelief. The light we have is the light of the Gospel. That light brings comfort and hope. The Gospel assures us that all our sins are forgiven by God. Having our sins forgiven, we have the hope of spending an eternity with our Savior and God in heaven.

With our big problem solved we can truly have a happy new year this year and for all the new years to come. Our new year is happy also because our eternal family is growing. Having the light of the Gospel in our hearts, we are to let this light shine out in our lives. "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8). In all we do and say we are to let our light shine out. Jesus says to us, "Let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

As others see the Light of the Gospel shining through us they will be drawn to that light, like a moth is drawn to a flame. Many who are drawn to the light of the Gospel will themselves believe that Gospel. They will become our brothers and sisters in the faith. Isaiah foresaw our eternal family growing. "Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn." "Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the arm." (Isaiah 60:3-4)

The light that first shone in Bethlehem, did not shine just in Judea. Although, as Jesus told the Samaritan woman, "salvation is from the Jews" [John 4:22] it was not to remain just with the Jews. Jesus told his followers "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15). Just as darkness covers the whole world, so the light of the Gospel is to shine in all parts of the world.

To this day the Gospel light is shining out into the entire world. It is shining out through our mission efforts. Many nations are coming to the one true light which is Jesus Christ. We read of how the Gospel is shining in the hearts of Japanese, Chinese, Indonesian, African, Latin Americans, Native Americans and European Christians. The eternal family of believers is indeed growing.

As we witness the light of the Gospel shining in our own hearts and in the hearts of so many others, opportunities for praise are present. Isaiah spoke of these opportunities when he wrote, "Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come. Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the LORD." (Isaiah 60:5-6).

As we see and hear more and more people being added to the eternal family of God, we have reason to praise God. Certainly if the angels in heaven rejoice over one sinner that repents, we should be joyful when that happens. Such joy will spill over into praise of the Lord our God. We will praise him for having the Gospel proclaimed to others throughout the world. We will praise him for sending the Holy Spirit into the hearts of people and bringing them to faith.

We will praise the Lord not only with our lips but also with our gifts. The greatest gift we can give to the Lord is the gift of ourselves. Giving ourselves to the Lord means that we are willing to expend ourselves for him.

Our text also speaks of praising the Lord with material gifts. Isaiah mentions gifts of gold and incense. As we hear these words, we are reminded of the Wise men who came searching for the Christ child. When they found him, they present him with material gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh. This was their way of praising the Lord for sending his Son as the Savior of the world.

The Lord also gives us opportunities to praise him with our material blessings. The offerings that we give for the support of the work of the Lord reflect our love of God. A portion of our gifts is used to spread the light of the Gospel into the world where darkness still abounds. When that light has reached all the corners of the earth, then truly everyone will have the most blessed of New Year's then and for eternity. Amen.

## PLEASE PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING...

Jane Ann Baney            Messiah's Call Committee  
Donna Barton            Minnie Minick  
Bob Bell                    Austin Parker  
Joyce Bradley            Noel Peachey  
Andrea & Bob Cameron    Butch & Sandy Pines  
Don Clark                Elienai Ramirez  
Terry Coder              Carolina Rubio  
Mary Ernest              Mary Sanders  
Ed Fraker                Megan Shoop  
Joan Fulkroad            Bob & Jeanette St. Clair  
Josh Hohol                Sieber Stoner  
Curt Houtz                Kay Stuck  
Carol Lyter               Ben & Dorothy Towsey  
Tami Metz                Jasmine Vazquez  
John Miller                Rich Walters  
Larry Miller              Barbara Wengard  
Shirley Miller            Dottie Wilson  
Jim Minick                Jim Woltman  
The Families of David Britcher and Tammy Dorward  
California Fire Victims

## AND FOR OUR SHUT-INS

### BROOKLINE RETIREMENT VILLAGE

(92 VILLAGE DRIVE, MIFFLINTOWN, PA 17059)

Jane Marhefka

### BERRY'S PERSONAL CARE CENTER

(62 LEXI STREET, MIFFLINTOWN, PA 17059)

Carol Simonton

### NORTHRIDGE CENTER FOR ASSISTED LIVING

(99 NORTHRIDGE DR., MCALISTERVILLE, PA 17049)

Dottie Smith

### RICHFIELD HEALTHCARE AND REHAB CENTER

(ROOM 6, 631 MAIN ST, RICHFIELD, PA 17086)

Dorothy Cleck

### HONNEMAN HOUSE

(58 HONNEMAN HOUSE DR., APT. 108, THOMPSONTOWN, PA 17094)

Ruth Cisney

Ray Bramm

### AT HOME

Jim Yetter  
128 Manbeck Drive  
Mifflintown, PA 17059

Mona Lawson  
2792 William Penn Hwy.  
Mifflintown, PA 17059

Kitty Walters  
P.O. Box 61  
Port Royal, PA 17082

## MESSIAH PRAYER LIST

If you wish to be included on the email recipient list for the Messiah Prayer Chain, please send an email to Sam Leister at [sleister@gmail.com](mailto:sleister@gmail.com).

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

JANUARY 1 – Marylou Hazard

JANUARY 29 -- Erin Harris

If you want to add your name to the birthday/anniversary list, or know someone you would like to acknowledge, please let the church office know at [mlchurchoffice@gmail.com](mailto:mlchurchoffice@gmail.com).

## CHRIST IN OUR HOME

A reminder to anyone who would like a daily devotional to jump start their day. There are plenty of devotionals in "Christ in our Home," which can be picked up and are FREE.....and are located at the back of the adult Sunday school room. Get yours today!

## STORE GIFT CARDS

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.

## MEALS ON WHEELS

Individuals, church groups, or Sunday School classes who would like to contribute to the Meals-On-Wheels program, your continued support would be greatly appreciated. Contributions can be sent to **Juniata Meals-On-Wheels, P.O. Box 251, Mifflintown, PA 17059.**

## JANUARY SERVANTS

### LECTORS

- 6 Harrison Mummah
- 13 Kate Swailes
- 20 Jean Compton
- 27 Barb Geedey

### ALTAR GUILD

- December 31 to January 13 ..... Linda Clark  
(Clint & Jamie Miller – Cup Communion 1/6 & 1/13)
- January 14 to 27 ..... Kay Varner
- January 28 to March 3.....Diana Wise

### ACOLYTES

- 6 Harrison Mummah & Hope Miller
- 13 Zeb Berry & Gabby Reed
- 20 Braedon Walton & Nick Reed
- 27 Hannah Ehrisman & Julia Martin

### OFFERING USHERS

- 6 Nick Reed & Hannah Ehrisman
- 13 Julia Martin & Haley Mummah
- 20 Slone Smith & Olivia Mummah
- 27 Zeb Berry & Harrison Mummah

### ALTAR FLOWERS

- 6 OPEN
- 13 OPEN
- 20 OPEN
- 27 OPEN

## UPCOMING WORSHIP LEADERS

- January 6 .....The Rev. Erin Bovendam
- January 13 ..... Sam Leister
- January 20 .....Deborah Hackenberger
- January 27.....Richard Beck

## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

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.

## DID YOU KNOW??

The name, given to the month of 'January', is derived from the ancient Roman name 'Janus' who presided over the gate to the new year. He was revered as the 'God of Gateways', 'of Doorways' and 'of the Journey.' Janus protected the 'Gate of Heaven', known as the 'Lord of Beginnings', is associated with the 'Goddess Juno-Janus', and often symbolized by an image of a face that looks forwards and backwards at the same time. This symbolism can easily be associated with the month known by many as the start of a new year which brings new opportunities. We cast out the old and welcome in the new. It is the time when many reflect on events of the previous year and often resolve to redress or improve some aspect of daily life or personal philosophy.

January's birthstone is the garnet, while the flower is the carnation. Also, January in the Northern Hemisphere is the seasonal equivalent to July in the Southern Hemisphere and vice versa. Leap years exempted, January always begins on the same day as October. In leap years, January always begins on the same day as April and July.

January is National Soup Month in the United States, as well as weight loss awareness month, blood donor month and baking month.



## DAILY BIBLE READINGS & PRAYER FOCUS

JANUARY 1 ----- LUKE 2:15-21  
*THOSE WHO HESITATE TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST*

JANUARY 2 ----- JOSHUA 1:1-9  
*THOSE WHO ARE SCARED OR VULNERABLE*

JANUARY 3 ----- ISAIAH 60:1-6  
*JERUSALEM AND ALL WHO LIVE THERE*

JANUARY 4 ----- PSALM 72:1-7, 10-14  
*GOVERNMENT WORKERS*

JANUARY 5 ----- EPHESIANS 3:1-12  
*VOLUNTEERS IN YOUR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY*

JANUARY 6 ----- MATTHEW 2:1-12  
*THOSE NAVIGATING UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY*

JANUARY 7 ----- ECCLESIASTES 1:1-11  
*PARK WORKERS AND RANGERS*

JANUARY 8 ----- ECCLESIASTES 2:1-11  
*THOSE WHO ARE DISCONTENT*

JANUARY 9 ----- ECCLESIASTES 3:1-15  
*THOSE FACING HARD CHOICES TODAY*

JANUARY 10 ----- ISAIAH 43:1-7  
*THOSE WHO DOUBT THEIR WORTH IN GOD'S EYES*

JANUARY 11 ----- PSALM 29  
*THOSE WHO DO NOT TRUST GOD'S POWER*

JANUARY 12 ----- ACTS 8:14-17  
*ACCOUNTANTS, FINANCIAL PLANNERS*

JANUARY 13 ----- LUKE 3:15-17, 21-22  
*THOSE PREPARING TO BE BAPTIZED*

JANUARY 14 ----- ACTS 8:18-24  
*THOSE TRYING TO EARN GOD'S GRACE*

JANUARY 15 ----- 1 JOHN 5:13-21  
*THOSE WORKING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS*

JANUARY 16 ----- ISAIAH 62:1-5  
*SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS AND COUNSELORS*

JANUARY 17 ----- PSALM 36:5-10  
*THOSE EXPERIENCING LOSS OF VISION*

JANUARY 18 ----- ACTS 4:8-13  
*HOME HEALTH CAREGIVERS*

JANUARY 19 ----- 1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-11  
*THOSE IN NEED OF HOPE*

JANUARY 20 ----- JOHN 2:1-11  
*THOSE PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE*

JANUARY 21 ----- ROMANS 12:1-8  
*THOSE PERSECUTED FOR THEIR FAITH*

JANUARY 22 ----- NEHEMIAH 2:1-10  
*DIPLOMATS WORKING FOR PEACE*

JANUARY 23 ----- NEHEMIAH 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10  
*BIBLE STUDY LEADERS AND LEARNERS*

JANUARY 24 ----- PSALM 19  
*POETS AND SONGWRITERS*

JANUARY 25 ----- GALATIANS 1:11-24  
*CONFIRMATION STUDENTS*

JANUARY 26 ----- 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-31A  
*CHURCH MUSICIANS*

JANUARY 27 ----- LUKE 4:14-21  
*THOSE FOR WHOM BELIEVING IS A STRUGGLE*

JANUARY 28 ----- 1 CORINTHIANS 14:1-12  
*YOUTH MINISTERS AND YOUTH GROUP LEADERS*

JANUARY 29 ----- PSALM 119:89-96  
*THOSE EXPERIENCING HARDSHIP*

JANUARY 30 ----- JEREMIAH 1:4-10  
*SEMINARIANS*

JANUARY 31 ----- PSALM 71:1-6  
*THOSE IN NEED OF SAFE SHELTER*

## MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

If you would like a copy of the most recent monthly financial reports for our church, please see our treasurer, Carolyn Bryner, before or after our morning worship service and give her your request, or please contact her at [mlchurchtreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:mlchurchtreasurer@gmail.com). Extra copies have been made and put on the table in the Adult Sunday School room, but very few, if any, are picked up and paper is being wasted, so we will try to go with this approach for the time being. THANK YOU!

## THANK YOU!

Thank you to Messiah Lutheran again this year for your generosity. We were able to help 163 children from 50 families have a Merry Christmas. Thanks to all who helped with this project. God Bless, Ted, Nicole, Garrett & Marley Wilson.



The Women of the ELCA met on Thursday evening, December 13th at 7:00 P.M. in the Young Adult Sunday School Classroom. 8 women were in attendance with each one presenting a reading or game. Diana Wise brought two beautiful, pristine antique Christmas decorations which belonged to her grandmother. Everyone enjoyed looking at them. Barb brought a singing Santa that is activated by motion/light. We listened to Christmas songs played by Santa. Everyone had a good laugh. We enjoyed talking about Christmas traditions we remembered as children.

Following the program we enjoyed refreshments brought by everyone. We enjoyed hot chocolate and marshmallows as our beverage. We all had a good time.

We do not have a business meeting this month due to our Christmas program, but our meetings will resume on January 10th at 7:00 P.M. Ann Beaver may have the program. HAPPY NEW YEAR!!



## 2019 FLOWER CHART

The new flower chart for 2019 is available in the Adult Sunday School Room. If you wish to place flowers on a specific date, please sign-up on the chart.

## 2019 OFFERING ENVELOPES

The 2019 church offering envelopes are available to pick up in the Library. Anyone who would like a statement of their contributions for 2018 for tax purposes may call the church office and your statement will be mailed to you.

## HELP NEEDED!!

The “undecorating” of the church from the Christmas season will take place on **Saturday, January 5<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM**. Anyone who has an hour to spare is kindly asked to please plan on coming to the church to help take down our Christmas decorations and prepare the church for the new year. Thank you!

## January

The days are short,  
The sun a spark  
Hung thin between  
The dark and dark.

Fat snowy footsteps  
Track the floor,  
And parkas pile up  
Near the door.

The river is  
A frozen place  
Held still beneath  
The trees' black lace.

The sky is low.  
The wind is gray.  
The radiator  
Purrs all day.

## MESSIAH ATTENDANCE AND OFFERINGS – DECEMBER 2 TO 30, 2018

DATE	Attendance	Total Offering	General Fund Offering	Other Funds Offering
DEC. 2	53 – Worship 34 – S.S.	\$3,704.60	\$3,023.95	Benevolence -- \$65.00 Sunday School -- \$86.00 Building Fund -- \$215.00 Flowers/Poinsettias -- \$62.40 Lutheran Disaster -- \$152.25 Memorial Fund -- \$100.00
DEC. 9	70 – Worship 30 – S.S.	\$4,391.20	\$3,171.60	Benevolence -- \$33.00 Sunday School -- \$75.00 Building Fund -- \$435.00 Flowers/Poinsettias -- \$234.40 Lutheran Disaster -- \$272.20 World Hunger -- \$70.00 Building Use -- \$100.00
DEC. 16	68 – Worship 28 – S.S.	\$4,564.65	\$2,502.00	Benevolence -- \$695.00 Sunday School -- \$34.85 Building Fund -- \$755.00 Flowers/Poinsettias -- \$7.80 Youth -- \$20.00 Matthew 25 Fund -- \$550.00
DEC. 23	93 – Worship 5 – S.S.	\$3,862.20	\$3,177.00	Benevolence -- \$80.00 Sunday School -- \$7.00 Building Fund -- \$350.00 Flowers/Poinsettias -- \$53.20 Lutheran Disaster -- \$95.00 World Hunger -- \$50.00 Matthew 25 Fund -- \$50.00
DEC. 24	121 – Worship	\$1,034.00	\$405.00	Matthew 25 Fund -- \$629.00
DEC. 30	53 – Worship 17 – S.S.	\$3,664.60	\$3,386.00	Benevolence -- \$110.00 Sunday School -- \$18.00 Building Fund -- \$135.00 Flowers -- \$15.60

### ELDERLY PASTOR & ROTTEN EGGS

The elderly pastor was searching his closet for his collar before church one Sunday morning. In the back of the closet, he found a small box containing 3 eggs and 100 \$1 bills.

He called his wife into the closet to ask her about the box and its contents. Embarrassed, she admitted having hidden the box there for their entire 30 years of marriage. Disappointed and hurt, the pastor asked her, "WHY?"

The wife replied that she hadn't wanted to hurt his feelings. He asked her how the box could have hurt his feelings. She said that every time during their marriage that he had delivered a poor sermon, she had placed an egg in the box.

The pastor felt that 3 poor sermons in 30 years was certainly nothing to feel bad about, so he asked her what the \$100 was for.

She replied, "Each time I got a dozen eggs, I sold them to the neighbors for \$1."



# JUNIATA COUNTY FOOD PANTRY JANUARY UPDATE

**HAPPY 2019 TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES!**

We are so thankful for all who shared their abundance with the Food Pantry during November and December. With your help we were able to provide almost 700 Thanksgiving and Christmas meals for neighbors who would have gone without. As we wind down our joyous celebrations of the holiday season, it's important to remember that for some folks this season has a different name: "The Season of Heat or Eat!" Many families this winter will have to choose whether to heat their homes or buy food and other necessities. Please continue to keep them in mind and in prayer as you pack away Christmas decorations and finish off leftovers.

In November 2018, the Food Pantry served 341 families - 885 individuals! We thank St. Stephen's Lutheran Church for sending volunteers for the month of November. Because it's flu season, and many of our families will be trying to battle illness as well as a lack of heat, if you could help by donating the items below, we would be very grateful.

## FOOD PANTRY BASIC NEEDS FOR JANUARY:

All non-perishable foods, dish detergent, laundry detergent, and other Cleaning Supplies

**DONATIONS OF CASH AND GIFT CARDS ARE ALSO APPRECIATED!**

PO Box 44, 114 N. Main St, Mifflintown, PA 17059

Phone: 717-436-9718

Hours: Tue 9-12 and 1-5, and Sat 9-12



\*PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE JUNIATA COUNTY FOOD PANTRY. (CONTACT PERSON: GLENDA FULTZ). Email: [jcfoodpantry@embarqmail.com](mailto:jcfoodpantry@embarqmail.com)

Our vestibule is open 24 hours a day to receive donations. Cash, checks, or gift cards may be deposited in the vestibule's mail slot. \*Non-perishable foods and non-food items may be dropped off at any time in our vestibule. Please deliver perishable foods only when someone is here to receive them. Thank you!

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Thanks to Julie Hengeveld

12-29-1999

GIVE IT UP WITH THAT STUPID SIGN  
ALREADY AND COME CHECK OUT THIS  
AWESOME STAR THAT WE SPOTTED OVER  
BETHLEHEM

**THANK YOU TO ALL WHO GAVE POINSETTIAS to decorate the church in honor of Christ's birth.**

**TO THE GLORY OF GOD:**

In memory of Sue Collins by family.

In loving memory of Floyd, Lois, and Garry Covert by Larry and Shirley Covert.

In loving memory of John and Helen Sieber by George and Kay Varner and family.

In memory of loved ones by Sieber and Ona Stoner.

In memory of loved ones by Don and Barb Geedey and Velma Suloff.

In memory of my grandparents, John and Hulda St. Clair, by Bob St. Clair.

In memory of my grandparents, Lester and Grace Parsons, by Bob St. Clair.

In honor of my parents, Robert and Jeanette St. Clair, by Bob St. Clair.

In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Knisely by Warren and Claire Mummah.

In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Mummah by Warren and Claire Mummah.

In honor of Ken and Ruth Mummah by Ken and Tawny Mummah and family.

In honor of Pam Campbell by Ken and Tawny Mummah and family.

In memory of Dorothy Campbell by Ken and Tawny Mummah and family.

In memory of loved ones by Matthew, Erin and Ella Harris.

In memory of parents, Harry and Martha Mummah, by Ken and Ruth Mummah.

In memory of parents, Dale H. and Charlotte Henry, by Ken and Ruth Mummah.

In memory of Earl (Whitey) Lawson by Janice Darrow.

In memory of Earl (Whitey) Lawson by Jim and Jodi Fitzgerald.

In memory of Earl (Whitey) Lawson by Jill Fetterolf.

In memory of Joyce R. Yetter by family.

In memory of Marian Maxine (Mickey) Yetter by family.

In memory of loved ones by Mike and Debbie Maugans.

In memory of our parents, Carl and Evie Duncan and Ralph and Libby Gaul, by Dave and Brenda Duncan.

In honor of our children, Stephanie, Nathaniel, and Shonna, by Dave and Brenda Duncan.

In memory of my mom, Emma Speece, by Cheryl Pinkerton.

In memory of Doreen Adams by Randy Clark.

In memory of my husband, Barry W. Lauver, sadly missed by your wife.

In memory of John and Anne Anstine by Rachael Diamond.

In memory of Dutch Walters by Kitty, Deb, Cyndi and Bob.

In memory of Samuel Zeiders by family.

In memory of Earl Lawson by Mona Lawson and family.

In memory of our parents, Richard and Daisy Van Gavree and Paul and Dorothy Patterson, by Rich and Cindy Van Gavree.

In memory of Harry 'Preach' Fairman by family.

In memory of Ansel B. McNaight by Anne McNaight and Jane Shearer.

In memory of Jean A. McNaight by Anne McNaight and Jane Shearer.

In memory of Arlyne Goss by Paul Goss and family.

In memory of Karen Goss by Larry Goss and family.

In memory of George and Evelyn Shirk and Gerald and Evelyn 'Nootie' Davis by family.

In memory of my grandparents by Kenton Stuck.

In honor of my mother by Kenton Stuck.

In memory of Jean, George and Bill Flint and Mary Lorraine Hazard by the George Hazard, Jr. family.

In honor of family and friends by George and Marylou Hazard.

In memory of loved ones by Judy and Herman Armstrong.

In memory of husband and loved ones by Midge Rowell.

In loving memory of Daniel and Thelma Dreibelbis and Abram and Ruth Shoener by the Stephen Dreibelbis family.

In memory of Tammy Pines Walton by the Walton, Pines and Stoner families.

In memory of Carolyn J. Wieseman and Paul F. Wiesman and Mr. and Mrs. Cloyd A. Pines, Sr. by the Pines and Stoner families.

In loving memory of Barry T. Stratford by Betty and family.

In memory and in honor of loved ones by Larry and Diana Wise and family.

In honor of my mother, Florence Williams, by Debrann Meinsler.

In honor of my sister, Victoria Suoja, by Debrann Meinsler.

In memory of all of our loved ones by Madeline Kramer and family.

The large Poinsettia on the piano in the front of the sanctuary was placed in memory of Joyce Yetter by Vernon Gunnion and family.

## MEMORIALS FOR LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

In memory of Ansel B. and Jean A. McNaight by Anne McNaight and Jane Shearer.

In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Knisely and Mr. and Mrs. Harry Mummah by Warren and Claire Mummah.

In honor of Ken and Ruth Mummah and Pam Campbell and in memory of Dorothy Campbell by Ken and Tawny Mummah and family.

In loving memory of John and Helen Sieber by George and Kay Varner and family.

In memory of our parents by Ed and Ann Beaver.

In memory of loved ones by Matthew, Erin and Ella Harris.

In memory of loved ones by Don and Barb Geedey and Velma Suloff.

In memory of our parents, Paul and Dorothy Patterson and Richard and Daisy Van Gavree, by Rich and Cindy Van Gavree.

In memory of Joyce R. Yetter and Marian Maxine (Mickey) Yetter by family.

In memory of loved ones by Mike and Debbie Maugans.

In memory of our grandparents by Steve and Linda Bahorik.

In memory of loved ones by Minnie Minick.

In memory of John and Anne Anstine by Rachael Diamond.

In memory of Floyd, Lois, and Garry Covert and loved ones by Larry and Shirley Covert.

In memory of Steward and Kathryn Ellis by Roberta Ellis

In memory of husband and loved ones by Midge Rowell.

In memory of Samuel Zeiders by family.

In memory of Earl Lawson by Mona Lawson and family.

In honor of our loving parents and grandparents, Warren and Claire Mummah, by Mary, Glenn, Shane, Todd, and Claire Grimm.

In memory of our parents by Al and Alice McClure.

# Pastoral Letter to the people of Messiah Lutheran

In my years of ministry, I have had the privilege of officiating at many funerals. I appreciate the words of the Funeral service found in the Green Hymnal, the Lutheran Book of Worship. One of the prayers goes like this.

***“Help us, we pray, in the midst of things we cannot understand, to believe and trust in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection to life everlasting.”***

“In the midst of things we cannot understand.” On December 13<sup>th</sup>, a member of Messiah killed his girlfriend and then himself. And all I can think, I do not understand.

Oh God. Why? I don’t have answers, but I do have a few thoughts.

Violence against women is too common in our country. It needs to be condemned. We need to do more to stop it.

Alcohol and Drugs can lead people down terrible paths. I don’t know if they were part of this tragedy, but too often they are part of the path to violence.

What do we do? We pray for this family. We pray for our community. We pray for this congregation. When we cannot understand, we look to God for comfort and strength.

As Lutherans, we look at the world as it is. Full of joy and filled with crushing loss. Filled with happy days and days of anger. Through it all we look to our God.

We know that our actions make a difference. We seek to live lives that avoid sin. And yet, we know that we are all sinners needing redemption in Jesus.

That week was a terribly sad week. This was a shocking event.

This is a time we need our Savior to give us strength. Join me in praying for the families impacted. Join me in reaching out to those who are hurting. Sometimes all we can say, is “I’m so sorry.” Sometimes all we can do is support one another as we live in the midst of things we cannot understand.

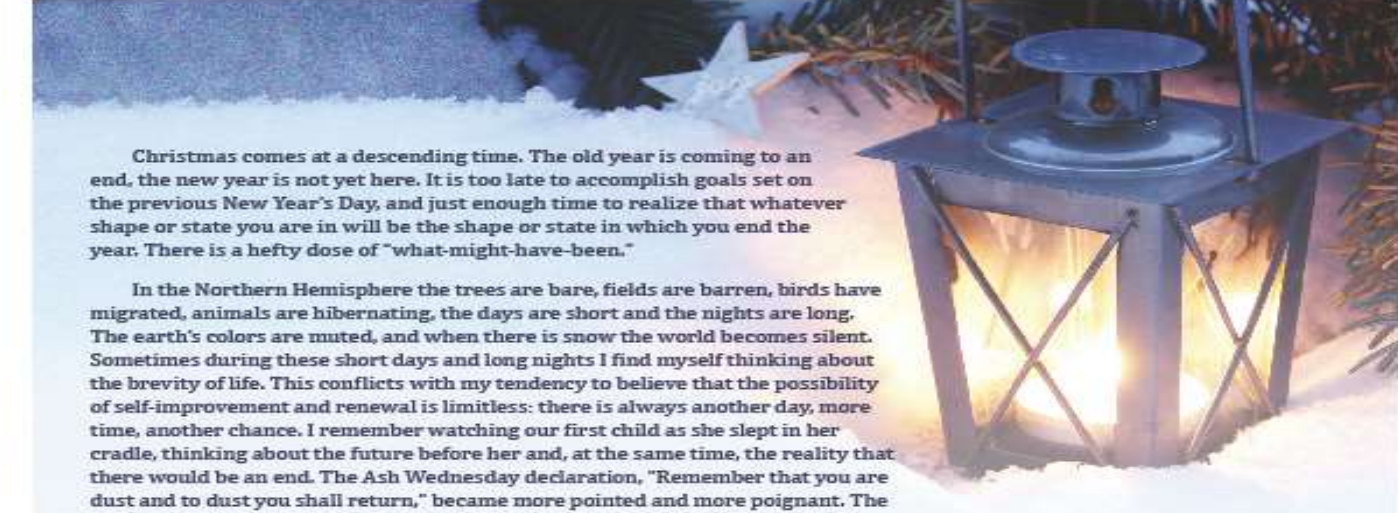
***“The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philipians 3:7***

Yours in Christ,

Interim Pastor Chris Mathiason, [cmathiason001@luthersem.edu](mailto:cmathiason001@luthersem.edu) 717-463-2490

## JANUARY 2019 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Wednesday, January 2:** -7:00 p.m., Choir Rehearsal in Rearick Room
- Thursday, January 3:** -1:00 p.m., Dulcimer Rehearsal  
-5:00 p.m., Girl Scout Troop #40440 Meeting in Fellowship Hall
- Sunday, January 6:** -EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD  
-9:15 a.m., Sunday School/Catechetical Class  
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion/Jr. Church/Children's Sermon -- Worship Leader: Rev. Erin Bovendam
- Monday, January 7:** -6:30 p.m., Knitting Class in Junior Church Room  
-8:00 p.m., AA meeting in Fellowship Hall
- Tuesday, January 8:** -9:00 a.m., "The Needlers" in Fellowship Hall
- Wednesday, January 9:** -6:30 p.m., 4-H Beef & Breeders Club in Youth Area  
-7:00 p.m., Choir Rehearsal in Rearick Room
- Thursday, January 10:** -7:00 p.m., WELCA Meeting in Fellowship Hall
- Sunday, January 13:** -BAPTISM OF OUR LORD  
-9:15 a.m., Sunday School/Catechetical Class  
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion/Jr. Church -- Worship Leader: Sam Leister
- Monday, January 14:** -6:30 p.m., Knitting Class in Junior Church Room  
-8:00 p.m., AA meeting in Fellowship Hall
- Tuesday, January 15:** -9:00 a.m., "The Needlers" in Fellowship Hall  
-6:30 p.m., Quilter's Guild in Fellowship Hall
- Wednesday, January 16:** -7:00 p.m., Choir Rehearsal in Rearick Room
- Thursday, January 17:** -1:00 p.m., Dulcimer Rehearsal  
-5:00 p.m., Girl Scout Troop #40440 Meeting in Fellowship Hall
- Sunday, January 20:** -9:15 a.m., Sunday School/Catechetical Class  
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion/Jr. Church/Children's Sermon -- Worship Leader: - Deborah Hackenberger  
-11:30 a.m., Worship & Music Committee Meeting in Church Library
- Monday, January 21:** -6:30 p.m., Knitting Class in Junior Church Room  
-8:00 p.m., AA meeting in Fellowship Hall
- Tuesday, January 22:** -9:00 a.m., "The Needlers" in Fellowship Hall
- Wednesday, January 23:** -7:00 p.m., Choir Rehearsal in Rearick Room
- Friday, January 25:** NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
- Sunday, January 27:** FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY  
-9:15 a.m., Sunday School/Catechetical Class  
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion/Jr. Church -- Worship Leader: Richard Beck  
-7:00 p.m., PPC Meeting in Youth Area
- Monday, January 28:** -6:30 p.m., Knitting Class in Junior Church Room  
-6:30 p.m., Property Committee Meeting in Choir Room  
-8:00 p.m., AA meeting in Fellowship Hall
- Tuesday, January 29:** -9:00 a.m., "The Needlers" in Fellowship Hall
- Wednesday, January 30:** -7:00 p.m., Choir Rehearsal in Rearick Room



Christmas comes at a descending time. The old year is coming to an end, the new year is not yet here. It is too late to accomplish goals set on the previous New Year's Day, and just enough time to realize that whatever shape or state you are in will be the shape or state in which you end the year. There is a hefty dose of "what-might-have-been."

In the Northern Hemisphere the trees are bare, fields are barren, birds have migrated, animals are hibernating, the days are short and the nights are long. The earth's colors are muted, and when there is snow the world becomes silent. Sometimes during these short days and long nights I find myself thinking about the brevity of life. This conflicts with my tendency to believe that the possibility of self-improvement and renewal is limitless: there is always another day, more time, another chance. I remember watching our first child as she slept in her cradle, thinking about the future before her and, at the same time, the reality that there would be an end. The Ash Wednesday declaration, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return," became more pointed and more poignant. The cradle-to-grave progression is our path; the inevitable decline of our strength.

"As for mortals, their days are like grass; they flourish like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more" (Psalm 103:15).

Maybe this is why the Christmas season can be so fraught. Of course, there is anticipation and celebration, but there is also pressure and stress. Perhaps we are trying to greet the Lord's birth with our best efforts (when I was a girl, Christmas preparations were not complete until the silver was polished, and that job fell to me), but desperation can creep into the urgency to get Christmas right, to hold back the night. "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight" (ELW, 279). This is freight that Christmas can't carry when Christmas depends on us.

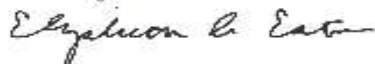
But Christmas also comes at an opportune time. God did not come to us that first Christmas when we were at the top of our game or when the world was perfect. Even the circumstances of Jesus' birth were a sharp reminder that all was not well – forced migration to Bethlehem, no room for the young family, born in a stall. Emmanuel – God with us – came to us and comes to us precisely at the time when our need is greatest. Our attempts to bring about perfection actually get in the way of receiving the gift. When we try to fit into an unrealistic ideal of who we ought to be instead of welcoming God into our real self, no matter how messy, then what is left on the 13th day of Christmas? Fatigue, certainly, but also the dull acceptance that life moves from cradle to grave.

On Christmas, God has reversed the cradle to grave progression. The angel announced to the shepherds:

*"I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: for to you is born this day in the city of David a savior, who is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."*

Here is the new reality. Here is the truth. Our lives are not a meaningless trudge from cradle to grave, but a joyful journey – true and lasting joy – from grave to cradle. All our brokenness and death meet life and healing and hope in the child in the manger. His cradle defeats the grave. We are loved. We are alive. Now we are free to greet this holy season.

*Merry Christmas, dear church.*



The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.