

The Messenger

A monthly publication from our Spirit filled church.

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We are a Spirit filled church following Jesus Christ.

Community Events

Pentecost at Messiah

Sunday, June 9th at 10:15am

In a very special Service of Holy Communion we'll celebrate the many ways the Spirit is at work in the people of Messiah as we recommission our many ministry team chairs and other leaders for the year ahead. We conclude the service with the lighting of candles, symbolizing the power of the Holy Spirit in our midst as we go out to nourish our local community in body, mind and soul!

Calumet Community Coffeehouse

Sunday, June 9th at 7:00pm

Join Mr. Doug, Kristen Olochnowicz and all our awesome Calumet kids for a wonderful night of show tunes and Calumet songs! This has truly become a cherished annual tradition! The event is free of charge but all proceeds will go to benefit our Calumet Campership Fund.

Narcan Training

Tuesday, June 11th at 1pm

We will be having Schenectady Public Health Department come to Messiah for Narcan training. All present will receive a Narcan kit. A sign-up sheet is available on the bulletin board in the Narthex!

Annual Ice Cream Social Wednesday, June 12th at

7:00pm

Mark your calendars and join us for our Annual Ice Cream Social featuring the Esperance Town Band. We will gather on the church lawn, (weather permitting) so bring your lawn chairs and your friends for a wonderful evening filled with fantastic music, great friends and delicious ice cream! We are looking for people to bake and help with set-up/cleanup and sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the narthex.

Meditation Happy Hour**Friday, June 14th at 5:30pm**

A big part of experiencing God's presence in your life, especially in such a fast paced, interconnected world, is simply taking some time to slow down and breath together in community. As a pilot new project speaking to this need, our very own Steve Friebel, who has led meditations for a variety of other groups, has offered to lead a roughly half hour meditation session with time for conversation afterwards. If this session is successful, we'll look into offering meditation more often at Messiah! If you're interested, please speak with Steve!

Father's Day at Messiah**Sunday, June 16th at 10:15am**

This Holy Trinity Sunday at Messiah we'll be honoring our fathers, grand-fathers and other men who make our lives so special in a number of different ways. We'll kick-off our summer with a casual outdoor service with coffee and as a late breaking change, what will still be the best after church reception of all time, something we're tentatively calling "Pastor Dustin's Nacho Bar." If you'd like to help lead our summer singalong, please arrive at 9:30am to practice with Mr. Doug. Our young people will also once again lead an awesome Children's Sermon about how they learn about God's love from the important men in their lives.

Young Adult Dinner**Thursday, June 20th at 6:00pm**

Come on out to our next Young Adult Dinner gathering at the good ol' parish house – bring a dish to share (preferably wheat and dairy free due to allergies) and/or a game to play! An event will be posted on Facebook shortly – please RSVP! Rianne is thinking of some comfort food themed dishes, perhaps even BBQ foods, but if you have any better suggestions, please let her know!

**The Sophie Mathis Experience:
A Benefit Recital****Sunday, June 23rd at 6:00pm**

Join us for a beautiful midsummer evening as we welcome noted local mezzo-soprano singer and soon to be famous daughter of Rotterdam, the one and only Sophie P. Mathis, in her debut recital! Accompanied by one of the Greater Capital Region's foremost pianists Michael Clement, Sophie will treat us to a variety of art songs, arias, and other beautiful and classic pieces. A free will offering will be taken to benefit Messiah's Calumet Campership Fund, which is helping subsidize eleven of our young people have a life changing experience Camp Calumet Lutheran this summer! Our Calumet kids will treat us to a tasty reception following the event as well.



Pictured above: Steve Friebel, Bill Ellis, Charlie Zitzmann, & Paul Bode at a Property & Grounds meeting where super serious things about mechanical improvements were discussed.

**Over 55 Gang Luncheon
Cruise****Thursday, June 27th**

We are planning a luncheon cruise at Lake George on Thursday, June 27th! This is a two-hour long cruise. For seniors over 65 the price is \$39.95, for those under 65 the price is \$43.95. For more information, please speak with Barb Hallett. Keep your eyes peeled for a signup sheet soon!

Blessing of the Graduates**Sunday, June 30th at 10:15am**

Gosh, a bunch of our young people are graduating from high school this year (including some of the gals in Pastor Dustin's first confirmation class), and it's time to honor them! Hanna, Sophie, Jacob, Kiersten and Kendra will participate in a very special graduation rite during worship and we'll have a pretty rad reception for them afterwards as well. Pastor Dustin will probably cry a lot. It'll be great. Join us!



Sharing
God's love at
Schenectady
Pride!
Pictured:
Kody
Schaffer,
Stephanie
Nicol, Pastor
Dustin, &
Ibrahim
Pedrinan!

Action. On Monday, June 10th we will have the first food pantry meeting. We will be discussing job descriptions, budget, procedures, etc. If you are a volunteer of the food pantry or are interested in the food pantry, PLEASE come to the meeting. All are welcome and your input is very important in running the pantry.

**Messiah Summer Film Series:
"Won't You Be My Neighbor?"
Wednesday, July 10th at
7:00pm**

Messiah will be hosting a community screening of "Won't You Be My Neighbor," a 2018 documentary on the life of Presbyterian minister and children's tv show host Mr. Fred Rogers. Learn all about how living a life of faith, strengthening one's neighborhood, celebrating diversity and caring for young people were all one and the same thing for Mr. Rogers! If you have any questions, please speak with Faith Formation Chair Jean Jones.

sixth grade with opportunities for older youth to assist through a leadership development program. The week will be centered around the theme of God's Good Creation, based on a curriculum from ELCA World Hunger that helps kids learn about how faith connects with caring for the environment and their neighbors. Cost per child will be \$10 with snacks and lunch provided. Early drop-off at 7:30am is also possible with prior notice. To sign up, please email our Parish Administrator Rianne Johnson at office@messiahschenectady.org or sign up in person on Sunday morning!

Ministry Team Meetings

Food Pantry Meeting

Monday, June 10th at 7:00pm

In the beginning of May, we attended a seminar at the Regional Food Bank. The result of that seminar was to form our own committee, but still be under the umbrella of Social

Care & Concern Team Meeting

Tuesday, June 11th at 2:00pm
From organizing a narcan training and discussing how to better support folks in recovery to discussing how to better assist our seniors, this will be an important conversation! If you have any questions or would like to join the team, please speak with Barb Hallett.

Congregation Council Meeting

Monday, June 17th at 7:00pm
Our Congregation Council will work through a number of initiatives and proposals this coming month, from discussing next steps for our 2020 - 2025 Strategic Plan, updates on our Messiah in Your Lifetime Capital Improvement Program, the possibility of a family retreat weekend at Calumet this fall and more. If you have any questions, please speak with Interim Madam President, Jackie DeTeso.

**Vacation Bible School 2019:
God's Good Creation
Monday, August 12th - Friday,
August 16th from 7:45am -
12:30pm**

For the first summer in many years Messiah will be hosting an awesome half day Vacation Bible School for Messiah children and kids from our local neighborhood alike! Messiah VBS is open to kids entering kindergarten through entering



A small sign that our Pastor Richard Rieger Harvest Garden is beginning to flourish!

Social Action Meeting Wednesday, June 19th at 7:00pm

The next meeting of the Social Action Committee will be held on Wednesday, June 19th at 7Pm. All are welcome and bring along any ideas as to how we could reach out in additional means to our community.

Spring Biannual Calendar Meeting

Sunday, June 23rd at 11:30am

In addition to scheduling major congregational events for the remainder of 2019, all of our committee chairs are asked to join us for a conversation around how we can better plan and coordinate the rapidly growing number of events and groups at Messiah Lutheran Church. One proposal is for members of our four main program areas, Fellowship, Worship & Music, Social Action and Faith Formation, to meet on a quarterly basis, with all schedule changes in between going through that group. If you have any questions, please speak with Pastor Dustin.

Property & Grounds Team Meeting

Monday, June 24th at 7:00pm

Gosh, we have a lot of work to do! Our Special Meeting of the Congregation voted to ask our Property Committee and Congregation Council to evaluate whether we should make mechanical upgrades to our building, especially in HVAC and electrical areas. We'll also hear updates about our Solar Energy Task Force, our edible/ native species landscaping plan and other greening opportunities at Messiah. If you have any questions, please speak with Co-Chairs Charlie Zitzmann and Rich Stigberg.

News You Can Use!

Care & Concern Update

On May 23rd we had a nice visit with Dave and Lore Ellis at Glendale and administered communion. We will be going to Glendale for a potluck dinner, date to be decided at our next Care and Concern meeting on June 11th. The Over 55 Gang had a movie and lunch on May 16th.

Card Ministry

Eleven cards were sent out this month.

Social Action Update

About 18 people assembled at the Regional Food Bank on May 4th to sort food. Working with a great team, we were done about 15 minutes early. Thanks to all who helped. We will be setting up a Regional Food Bank sorting session in

September and again in early December. For those of you who want to help at Concerned For the Hungry's Thanksgiving Food Drive, we will again be helping with packing the baskets on Saturday, November 23rd. Anyone who would like to help sign people up for the baskets is encouraged to come to St. John the Evangelist School Hall on the weekend before Halloween, October 25th, 26th and 27th. (5-8 pm on the 25th, 10-4 on the 26th and 1-done on the 27th). Please call Pete Jones with any questions.

Confirmation Class Update

Our five confirmation students, Tyler Jones, Jesse Mathis, Haileigh Thiessen, Abriel McGuire, and Hannah Borski, as well as chaperones Jean Jones, Rianne Johnson, and Pastor Dustin will be heading to Camp Calumet from June 25th to 29th for an awesome Confirmation retreat! Keep a lookout on Facebook for many updates throughout the duration of the retreat!

New Parking Options at Messiah

We've heard loud and clear that folks are having greater difficulty parking for Sunday worship. With many thanks to Karen Kreischer, we've made some short term arrangements that will ease this issue until a permanent solution can be developed. As always, primary parking is located in our main lot on Guilderland Avenue and along Oak Street near our main entrance.

Additional handicap spots will soon be added along Oak Street. Overflow parking on Sunday mornings can now be found in the unpaved portion of the parking area behind our wonderful neighbor John Fitzner Canvas and Auto on the corner of Curry Road and Floral Avenue. Affectionately known as "The Boat Place" to many in our congregation, they have recently agreed to allow us to use this space only on Sunday mornings and at your own risk. Please respect their generosity!

Bill Becker helping sort through copious amounts of food that was distributed to other nearby food pantries!



Prayer Life at Messiah
If anybody has any ideas or suggestions on growing prayer life at Messiah, please let Rianne know! She is brainstorming ways to implement some sort of prayer ministry so that we can become more comfortable and confident in praying for our world and community. Thanks!

Cheryl Borski and Betsy Sweet planting some of our edibles on Rogation Sunday, to be given to clients of the Bread of Life Food Pantry.



What in the world is Realm??

Have you checked your email lately? What about your trash or spam folders? You might have an invite to Realm waiting for you! Realm is Messiah's new cloud-based directory system where you will be able to access your giving information, group events, community event signups, and other members' basic information (phone number, email, address – we can walk you through making any of these private if necessary.) Realm can be accessed via www.onrealm.org or by navigating to the bottom of our website and clicking the "realm log-in" link on the bottom right.

As of June 6th, our directory will be open to the congregation. You must have an account on realm in order to access this. Please respect everybody's privacy by only using this information for communication between you, them, and other church members and not pass this information on to third-party sources. If you do not have internet access or use it sparingly, no worries! We will print out copies of the directory for you on-demand and you will always have opportunities to sign up for events just like you currently do. There is a brief walk-through printed out and placed on the table in the narthex near the bulletin board. Please speak with Penny Incitti or Rianne Johnson for any help setting up your account or if you have any questions!

Synod Assembly Update

Pastor Dustin along with Synod Delegates Merle Longwood and Rianne Johnson trekked out to Rochester from May 30th to June 1st for three days of voting, attending workshops, and advocacy. Our very own Dr. Merle Longwood led the Upstate NY Synod to support the ELCA's endorsement of the Earth Charter. The Earth Charter is an ethical framework for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society in the 21st century. It seeks to inspire in all people a new sense of global interdependence and shared responsibility for the well-being of the whole human family, the greater community of life, and future generations. It is a vision of hope and a call to action and its adoption passed our synod assembly with 192 votes in favor and only 13 opposed!

Workshops that we attended included learning about incredible new initiatives to combat racism, revitalize aging church buildings, and teaching about the Bible in effective ways to youth as well as busy adults. A few other highlights were voting to have Synod Council formally consider questions around inclusion and justice for people of color and the LGBTQIA+ Community for bishop candidates, presenting an amendment led by Pastor Dustin to restore funding to the New York State Council of Churches and five campus ministry programs which narrowly failed to pass with a vote of 108-101, and small group conversations about congregational vitality. New England Synod Bishop Jim Hazelwood gave a wonderful sermon that went so well with this year's theme "We are Witnesses," sharing some of his experiences with the "nones" (non-religious) and how there are many things we can learn from each other. Lastly, The Upstate NY Synod raised a total of \$38,760.76 to support ELCA World Hunger! If you would like to know more about what happened at Synod, please talk to Pastor Dustin, Merle, or Rianne – they would love to share!

Special Meeting of the Congregation Update

We had what only can be described as a very successful Special Meeting of the Congregation on June 2nd! During this time we discussed and acted upon three matters. First, we unanimously approved a basic project proposal for our Bread of Life Community Center. Our Grant Writing Task Force and Pastor Dustin will in turn now begin using this document to apply for grants and cultivate relationships with community leaders outside the congregation.

Second, we unanimously adopted new vision, values and purpose statements all of which you can read in the Pastor's Letter below.

Finally, we discussed possible short term mechanical improvements in great detail. The electrical side of things is turning out to be a bit more complicated than expected although we do seem to have a cost affective solution for replacing the 1960s era furnaces for the sanctuary before cold weather sets in again. The Congregation voted to affirm our Property Committee's work and tasked the Congregation Council with determining whether or not an additional Special Meeting of the Congregation was needed to approve expenditures lower than 10% of our annual budget (which amounts to roughly \$13,000). A quick poll of the congregation also indicated members would prefer paying for mechanical upgrades through a small capital appeal campaign rather than exhausting all our reserve funds.

If you have any questions, please speak with Interim President Jackie DeTeso or Pastor Dustin.

MINISTER OF THE MONTH: STEVE FRIEBEL

Steve Friebel is the son of Betty & Ernie Friebel, beloved members of Messiah. After a few years away from the church, Steve returned to Messiah in 2018 and has become a very active member of our spirit filled community. You may see Steve at a church council meeting, mowing the church lawn (or servicing the lawn mower), fixing anything mechanical, building and stocking shelves in the food pantry, or making sure the candles in the sanctuary are in working order. Just about anything you ask him to do, it is done with a smile and is usually completed before you get the request out of your mouth.



In Steve's free time away from the church, he enjoys working in his yard, grilling (he is a great cook), working on his truck, going to Great Escape and Lake George, camping and spending time with his wonderful girlfriend!

Steve lives in Loudonville, NY with his son, Dylan.

We are blessed to have Steve back as a member of Messiah. Congratulations on being our minister of the month!

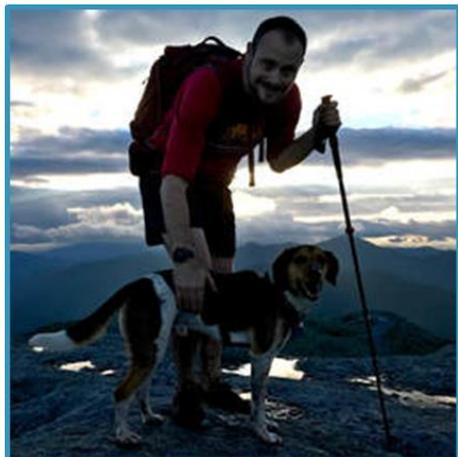
MINISTRY OF THE MONTH: PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The purpose of this committee is to organize the maintenance and continual improvement of all congregation property in a manner consistent with the mission of the congregation. The property committee is tasked with preparing, reviewing, and completing an ongoing maintenance project list; maintaining standard operating procedures; supervising the development of plans and procedures for the completion of any authorized capital improvement program, scheduling and organizing Spring and Fall cleanup days, and maintaining records of maintenance and capital improvement projects.



Our Property Committee is very dedicated group of individuals with various skills and talents; if you'd like to join them, stop by a meeting or get in contact with Rich Stigberg or Charlie Zitzmann to see if there are any ways you can help!

PASTOR'S LETTER: REV. DUSTIN G. WRIGHT



Dear siblings in Christ,

I couldn't be happier that our congregation last Sunday voted unanimously to adopt the statements below that form the first portion of a Strategic Plan for Messiah Lutheran Church: 2020 – 2025. Many thanks as well to all who came out to extra meetings and prayed about what God is calling us to do in our local community and who we are as a congregation. Over the summer, our ministry teams will use these statements to develop five year goals and indicators that will make up the remainder of the Strategic Plan. **Our building, our budget and our programs are not goals within themselves, but merely tools to do ministry, so before launching any major new initiatives, getting clear on what God is calling us to do is critically important.** If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me!

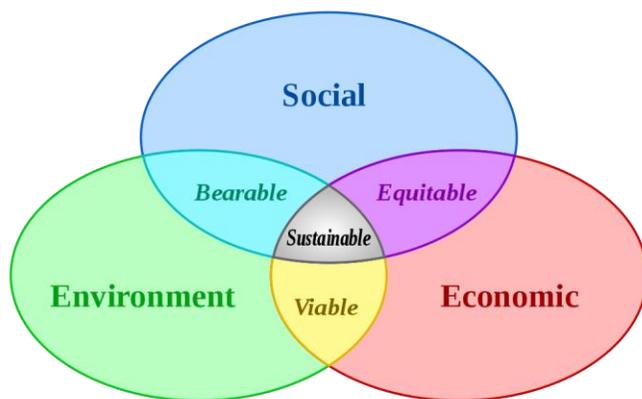
May God's peace be with you,

Pastor Dustin

Vision Statement

We believe God's vision for Rotterdam, Schenectady County and the greater Capital Region is a community grounded in human connection and sustainability*, where everyone can live abundantly, where everyone can learn from our diversity and where everyone can live free from fear.

** In this document we define sustainability as "addressing present economic, social and environmental realities without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same." For a visual representation, please see the Venn diagram to the right.*



Core Values

We are a welcoming and inviting congregation. Grounded in Hebrews 13: 1-2, "Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it," we believe everyone is created in the image of God and therefore we welcome and actively invite all people into full participation in the body of Christ without regard to race, nationality, ethnicity, ability, marital status, gender identity or sexual orientation.

We are a proactive congregation. Grounded in Acts 1:8, “...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth,” we believe the Holy Spirit empowers and leads us as we prayerfully take risks, develop innovative ministries and get to work witnessing to Christ through word and deed.

We are a learning congregation. Grounded in Psalm 25: 4-5, “Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long,” we believe that justified by grace we can freely question, discover and grow in our understanding of the Good News of Jesus Christ through worship, faith formation, social action and fellowship.

We are a socially engaged congregation. Grounded in Micah 6:8, “What does the Lord require of you but do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God,” we believe acts of individual service and striving for peace and justice, grounded in prayer and worship, all go hand in hand. Guided by the canonical Old and New Testaments, the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds, and the confessional documents and social statements of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we serve our neighborhood as a safe place for difficult conversations about the social issues of our time. In collaboration with interfaith and ecumenical partners, nonprofits, businesses and local government, we serve Christ in the face of our neighbors.

We are a congregation together. Grounded in Ecclesiastes 4: 9;12, “Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help... A threefold cord is not quickly broken,” we believe no one is created to live alone. A diverse family of imperfect people, we celebrate together and worship together, eat together and sing together, serve together and discern together, journeying through life together in community with Christ and one another.

Purpose Statement

We are a Spirit filled congregation grounded in Jesus Christ, nourishing our local community in body, mind and soul. Saved by grace, renewed by worship and set free by the love of God, we collaborate with like-minded individuals and organizations to feed the hungry, bridge divides and build a sustainable neighborhood in Rotterdam, Schenectady and the wider Capital Region of New York.

PRESIDING BISHOP'S LETTER: BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Liturgy is important—not each constituent part—but the basic structure of corporate worship: gathering, word, meal and sending. It's a discipline Lutherans willingly undertake because it helps individuals and the entire community express our connection with other Christians throughout the world and across the ages. When we gather, it's not simply a group of like-minded individuals. We gather in Jesus' name and we gather as the body of Christ. "So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another" (Romans 12:5).

The African concept of Ubuntu, "I am because we are," captures this. South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu explains it this way: "I need you in order for me to be me, and you need me in order for you to be you. We are bound together. I need other human beings to be a human being. A person is a person through other persons." We gather in the presence of Jesus, God with us, in whom we all have our ultimate identity.

I've often heard it said that one can worship God in the beauty of nature. I'm glad that people are moved to awe and praise when encountering the majesty of God in the created world. We all should stop and notice the divine presence! But corporate worship is something else. This was made beautifully evident to me when I visited the Community of Sant'Egidio in Rome. This community of laypeople gathers regularly for Scripture reading, prayer, and to serve the poor and broken in the city around them. Sant'Egidio takes particular care of those who are mostly homebound during the week. Weekly worship with the rest of the community is a celebration for these people. They are reunited with the rest of the family—all gathered to worship the Lord. Their joy is palpable.

We gather around the word—Scripture, preaching, song, prayer and creeds, but especially around the living Word, Jesus Christ. We are not the focus of our worship—God is. Worship is not primarily about "me" or about "us." Worship is not a performance for the community, but an offering directed to God. Jesus promised that when we gather in his name, he is in the midst of us. How would our worship change if we understood literally that Christ is present and we are offering Christ our worship and praise?

We gather for the meal. Gathered around our tables, we are gathered around the one table. We are fed and forgiven, reconciled and released, crucified and raised. In the words of institution, we hear the Jesus story—the story of Jesus, broken and shed, who gives himself completely for the life of the world. If your congregation uses the prayer that surrounds these words, you also hear the history of salvation. While each individual receives God in the sacraments, no individual receives this grace alone apart from the rest of the community.

We are sent. Gathered into one by the Spirit, carrying and bearing the word, never separated from the love of God in Christ Jesus, we are sent into the world. Some of the most important words spoken in the liturgy are "Go in peace. Serve the Lord." Out we go, serving this world God so loves. Jesus meets us there—in our struggles, joys, life and death. Then we gather again in worship to be strengthened and restored. Peasants in France would take a loaf of bread with them into the fields. They would take a bite of bread, throw the loaf down the row, and begin the backbreaking work of hoeing and tending their crops. When they caught up to the bread, they took another bite and threw it down the row again. In this way they could keep on going. So it is with us as we receive the bread of life and serve the world.