

# The Messenger

A monthly publication from our Spirit filled church.

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We are a Spirit filled church following Jesus Christ.

## The Months Ahead

### Calumet Night at Blaze Pizza Friday, June 30th from 5-8pm

Five of our awesome young people are attending Camp Calumet Lutheran this summer and we need to do everything we can to support them! One upcoming opportunity is to attend their fundraiser night at Blaze Pizza in Mohawk Commons shopping plaza (400 Balltown Rd., Niskayuna). Bring [a copy of this flyer \(paper or on your phone\)](#) and an empty bellies as 20% of your purchase will be donated to our Calumet fund! You'll have good pizza, hang out with great folks and supporting an amazing cause!

### #SundayFunDay Vacation Bible School | "Escape Through the Red Sea"

Sunday, July 2nd at 9:00am

Wow, so we are really stoked for a brand-new Faith Formation experience for our young people, their families, and frankly anyone who's interested in participating in our Spirit filled church. Throughout the summer Pastor Dustin will be coming out of camp counselor retirement to lead a weekly more Camp Calumet-oriented learning experience every Sunday through Labor Day (with Vicar Dan and others filling in on occasion). Each Sunday we'll learn about a kid-friendly Old Testament story through fun

(and frequently outdoors) activities. Our confirmation class students and high school youth will be asked serve as assistant camp counselors and parents are highly encouraged to participate as well. It is our hope that this will provide a fun opportunity for kids and their parents to get to know each other a little better, prepare to attend Camp Calumet and learn about Old Testament stories rarely discussed in our regular curriculum. Feel free to let your kids wear clothes to church that can get a little dirty and please join us! For a complete #SundayFunDay schedule, click [here](#).

**We Must Plant the Church: The Story of Lutherans in North America | "Working Together: Lutherans Uniting"**

**Sunday, July 2nd at 9:00am**

When Lutherans came to America, they brought with them Martin Luther's belief that people of faith engage the big questions of the day. Throughout the summer hear more about this story, characterized by the tension between honoring the European roots of the church and adapting to the new realities of American life. The Lutheran church, from its earliest days, faced religious pluralism, intolerance, racism, war, lack of state support and diversity of languages and traditions. It wasn't easy then, and it isn't easy now. Understanding American Lutheran history can change the way we see ourselves and our future. Join our Adult Education Class as they explore Dr. Martin Marty's excellent course "[We Must Plant the Church](#)" over seven Sunday mornings this summer!

**Compline 'Round the Campfire**

**Sunday, July 2nd at 6:00pm**

It's back! Two summers ago when we launched our experimental "Compline 'Round the Campfire" service weekly, many folks who were away for the weekend greatly appreciated the alternative worship opportunity to the point that our total summer worship attendance barely declined at all! On top of that, we've had very positive feedback from our monthly

Coffeehouse Worship services on Sunday evenings with Mr. Doug. So, as an experiment this summer, we'll be relaunching "Compline 'Round the Campfire" on every Sunday evening (except for monthly Coffeehouse Sundays) through Labor Day. This simple meditative service, similar to our Monday through Wednesday worship services during Holy Week, will be a fantastic opportunity to get ready for the week ahead. If we have decent attendance this summer, we may continue with weekly Sunday evening worship opportunities (partially led by our Confirmation Class) year round!

**Coffeehouse Worship**

**Sunday, July 9th at 6:00pm**

An innovative worship experience that uses the most ancient of Christian traditions to better understand contemporary life. Douglas J. Chilton will treat us to some incredible music upstairs and communion will be served more as an actual meal, similar to how the first Christians celebrated the Eucharist! This month's faith question will be, "What's the deal with discipleship?"

**Reformation Summer Film**

**Series: "Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Nazi Resister, Martyr"**

**Monday, July 10th at 7:00pm**

Join us for another awesome summer evening of brats and brews as we continue exploring the implications of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. This month we'll be viewing "Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Nazi Resister, Martyr," a



dramatic documentary by Martin Doblmeier (2003) portraying the young German Lutheran pastor and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who resisted the Nazi regime and was hanged two weeks before World War II was over. How might his witness against injustice inform our own contemporary ministry? Join us and find out!

**Community Office Hours  
Tuesdays from 12:00pm-  
2:00pm**

Join Pastor Dustin once again at Tops American Grill, Bakery and Bar at 351 Duanesburg Road in Rotterdam. He'll be available most Tuesdays from 12:00pm - 2:00pm, meeting with members of the congregation and our local neighbors alike. Have a faith question? Looking for a new church? Need help planning an event or new ministry? Be sure to stop by!

**Capital Region Truth  
Commission on Poverty in New  
York State**

**Thursday, July 13th from 5:00-  
8:00pm**

**IUE-CWA 301 Hall, 336  
Broadway, Schenectady**

Despite New York's great wealth, more than 3 million New Yorkers live below the federal poverty line, and millions more struggle to make ends meet. In Schenectady, Albany, and Rensselaer counties, 4 in 10 households earn less than the cost of living. Why is this? How are individuals, families and our community impacted, and what is being done to respond? How can we create a more just community in which all our neighbors can thrive? Join us on Thursday, July 13, to hear people directly affected by poverty and related injustices, direct service providers, advocates, faith leaders, and policy experts who will reflect on these questions. Email Joe Paparone with the Labor/Religion Coalition at [jpaparone@labor-religion.org](mailto:jpaparone@labor-religion.org) if you have any questions or would like to

attend! This is part of the New Poor People's Campaign, and an important part of statewide anti-poverty movement building efforts.

**Tailgating at Malta  
Friday, July 14th at 6:00pm**

Ready for some stock car DIRT track racing at its finest? Then plan to join the Mighty Men Members of Messiah at Malta, (also known as Albany-Saratoga Speedway) on Friday, July 14, 2017 for a night at the track.

We'll start the evening off with a tailgate in the parking lot at 6 p.m., with racing beginning at 7 p.m. Hamburgers and hot dogs and water will be provided. Please bring a dish to share and the beverage of your choice. Also recommended, ear protection as the roar of the cars at the Great Race Place is LOUD! As with all Mighty Members events, because we strive to be an inclusive organization, this is open to men and women, girls and boys. There is no cost to park. Admission to the track is

\$10 for adults, \$2 for kids 11 and under. The track is located at 2671 State Hwy 9, just north of I-87, exit 12, approximately 40 minutes from church.

Watch for a signup sheet on the bulletin board and please indicate how many are coming and what you'll be bringing.

If you have any questions, please contact Rich Becker ([richbecker2340@gmail.com](mailto:richbecker2340@gmail.com)).

**New York State Council of  
Churches Sunday**

**Sunday, July 16th at 10:15am**

For about nine months now, Pastor Dustin has served as President of the [New York State Council of Churches](#) (NYS-COC), a nonpartisan, ecumenical statewide organization that engages in advocacy, faith formation opportunities and supports New York's Protestant prison chaplains. NYSCOC Executive Director Peter Cook will join us to give a Temple Talk about the organization and Kody Schaffer, who attended a Council trip to the United Nations this past winter, will give a short presentation after worship about his experience. If you're looking to figure out a way to build a more moral society in line with Christ's teachings, join us to learn more about an organization that's doing just that!



**Glendale Gathering**  
**Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup> from 4:00-**  
**6:00pm**

Our next potluck dinner at Glendale Nursing home will be July 16 from 4 to 6 pm. This has become an anticipated event and all have a great time. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Please plan on attending this fun event by signing up and indicating the number attending and the dish you will be bringing.

**Bridging the Urban/ Rural**  
**Divide Conference**  
**Tuesday, July 18<sup>th</sup> to Thursday,**  
**July 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**Fulton-Montgomery**  
**Community College,**  
**Johnstown, New York**

As a statewide organization, the New York State Council of Churches (NYSCOC) has recognized a great cultural divide amongst members of our rural, suburban and urban congregations. With this fact in mind, we invite folks of faith from across New York to join us at Fulton-Montgomery Community College in Johnstown this summer as we take intentional time to dig beneath and bridge the divide amongst our various communities and ministry contexts. From Messiah, Pastor Dustin, Merle Longwood, Rianne Johnson and Kody Schaffer have signed up for this event so far, and we'd love for a few more folks to join us!

Featured speakers at the Conference include:

- Dr. James Evans, Senior Pastor, St. Luke Tabernacle Community Church, Rochester, New York. Dr. Evans was Professor of Systematic Theology and President of Colgate Rochester Theological Seminary.
- The Reverend Karina Feliz, Pastor, United Methodist Church of the Highlands and Co-Chair of the New York Annual Conference Immigration Task Force.
- Dr. Alison Collis Greene, Assistant Professor of History, Mississippi State University and author of the award winning book: "No Depression in Heaven" which describes the advocacy work of churches in the Mississippi Delta during the Great Depression.

In addition, there will be elected officials of all political parties, labor and business leaders, community organizers, small group discussion and opportunities to workshop around local issues with a diverse group of colleagues. Faith leaders, activists, community leaders, business-people, elected people from all political parties, and indeed all folks interested in bridging the urban-rural divide are welcome to attend! Full cost for the conference is \$325.00 including food and housing but scholarships are available. If you're interested in joining us,

click [here](#) or speak with Pastor Dustin.

**WELCA Picnic**

**Tuesday, July 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm**

On July 18 at 6:30 pm WELCA will be holding their annual picnic. This is held at the "Olochnowicz Garage-mahal." All are welcome. Hostesses are Kristen Olochnowicz and Judy Becker. Please bring a dish to share; dessert and beverages will be provided. A free-will offering will be taken.

**Young Adult Social: Katie**  
**O'Byrnes**

**121 Wall Street, Schenectady**  
**(in front of Amtrak Station)**  
**Thursday, July 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm**

This month's conversation will focus around what some of our young adults have learned at the New York Council of Churches hosted "Bridging the Rural/Urban Divide" conference at Fulton-Montgomery Community College over the last couple of days. As always, appetizers are on us! Any and all young adults with a social-justice inspired faith are welcome to join.

**City Mission Golf Tournament**  
**Friday, July 28<sup>th</sup>**  
**Schenectady Municipal Golf**  
**Course**

Last year, City Mission raised a total of \$23,000 to go towards providing shelter to nearly 100 homeless men, women, and children each night; serving over 550 meals a day; offering a 4-week summer camp for inner-city children; providing weekend meals for 1000 elementary school children in Schenectady each week of

the school year; and training men and women for long-term success in the workplace. All proceeds go to City Mission. Ernie will be collecting donations after worship on July 16 & 23rd. Additional information is also available on the bulletin board in the narthex if you're interested in registering to golf.

**Hartwick Seminary Summer  
Institute of Theology  
Sunday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> – Friday, July  
28<sup>th</sup>**

HSSIT is quickly approaching and the registration deadline will be here in only a couple of weeks! If you're interested in learning a little bit about Christianity over the Summer, be sure to check this out! You can sign up for as many or as little classes as you'd like; you can commute and be there for just a day or even stay in a dorm for the whole week. (Rianne is going to be opting to stay in a dorm for a week since she missed out on those parts of early-adulthood.)

Prices for a resident is \$330/week; commuter is \$250/week (both of these options include any amount of classes as well as food); One day overnight is \$125/day. individual single-day seminars are \$45 each, and individual Monday-Friday classes are \$75 each. A booklet with course offerings is in the narthex and we can also email/print PDF files of the course offerings as well as registration sheet as requested. Even if you won't be able to make it, take a look!

**Pastor on Vacation  
July 24<sup>th</sup> – August 4<sup>th</sup>**

Pastor Dustin will be taking his regular summer vacation July 24<sup>th</sup> through August 4<sup>th</sup> to head out to the Pacific Northwest with his brother Darren! We are currently arranging for coverage but in case of a pastoral emergency give Rianne a call at 518.925.0819 and she'll put you in touch with a local clergy person familiar to the congregation.

**Brooks' BBQ National Youth  
Gathering Fundraiser  
Tuesday, July 25<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 -  
7:00pm**

The people of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Glenville are organizing a Brooks' Chicken BBQ to help raise funds for their youth to attend the [2018 ELCA National Youth Gathering](#) next summer, and as a number of our youth are interested in attending as well, they invited us to join in! Cost per chicken dinner is \$10.00 for a full chicken and \$7.00 for half, with our youth making back \$2.80 or \$2.75 per meal sold. Sign up for a meal by July 9<sup>th</sup> on the narthex bulletin board and have our youth deliver the meals back to Messiah for you! If you have any questions, please speak with Pastor Dustin.

**Valley Cats Game  
Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 3:30pm  
Joe Bruno Stadium**

Come on out and hang out with the Valleycats on July 30, 2017! Activities start at 3:30 as Southpaw reads a book to the kids, who get to go home with

their very own copy. At 4:00, kids are allowed on the field for a pregame catch. The game will start at 5:00; included with every ticket will be a voucher for one hotdog and one soda. After the game, kids are allowed back on the field to run the bases! Valleycat players will also be signing autographs following the game. All of this is for only \$6.25 per person. Everybody is invited, so bring a friend and come join Messiah at the Joe.



**SICM Summer Lunch  
Monday, July 31<sup>st</sup> – Friday,  
August 4<sup>th</sup> from 12:45-2:00pm**

Our second week for summer lunch begins on Monday, July 31<sup>st</sup> thru August 4<sup>th</sup> at Hillhurst Park on Campbell Ave. We ask that you wear a hat and be there at 12:25. We serve from 12:45-2:00pm. There are still some openings for volunteers on the sign-up sheet for this week. It is a very rewarding experience and we meet some wonderful children. Thank you for volunteering.

**Rotterdam Neighborhood  
Night Out  
Tuesday, August 1<sup>st</sup> from  
4:00pm-8:00pm**

On Tuesday August 1<sup>st</sup> the Rotterdam Neighborhood Watch Inc. will host the 2nd

Annual Rotterdam National Night Out at 100 Princetown Road. This is a free event that runs from 4 pm till 8 pm. The event is part of a nationwide celebration put in place to help foster and improve relations between citizens and law enforcement agencies as well as build neighborhood camaraderie. There will be some vendors as well as informational booths. We will have family fun entertainment. Rotterdam Police Dept. will be present doing Child ID cards. The Schenectady County Sheriffs Dept. will be present with a K-9. The New York State Police will also be present. We are always looking for folks that wish to volunteer some time to help make our event an amazing time. Please feel free to contact Jim Miller if you have any time or questions.

**Mens Night: BBQ and Axe Throwing**  
**Monday, August 7<sup>th</sup> from 7-9pm**

**The Crowther Estate**

Join our awesome men's group for a delicious potluck bbq and ax throwing tutorial from Chip Crowther, our Spirit filled community's resident lumberjack contest expert! Pastor Dustin and Chip have been in conversation about this event for a couple years now, and it's gonna be fantastic. Simply RSVP on the narthex bulletin board!

**Faith Formation Committee**  
**Wednesday, August 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm**

Our next Faith Formation meeting will be August 9th at 7pm. Anyone interested in planning any of our functions is encouraged to come.

**Mary, Mother of Our Lord Commemoration**  
**Sunday, August 13<sup>th</sup> at 10:15am**

The Church (including Martin Luther) for many centuries has honored Mary with the title theotokos, meaning "God-bearer," for her role in giving birth to the Son of God. Her song, the Magnificat, speaks eloquently of God's lifting the lowly and feeding the hungry. Join us for a very special Sunday as we commemorate Mary and recognize the contributions of many women throughout the history of the church!

**Coffeeshouse Worship**  
**Sunday, August 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm**

An innovative worship experience that uses the most ancient of Christian traditions to better understand contemporary life. Douglas J. Chilton will treat us to some incredible music upstairs and communion will be served more as an actual meal, similar to how the first Christians celebrated the Eucharist! This month's faith question will be, "What do Lutherans think about Mary? Isn't she mostly a Catholic thing?"

**Sunday School Meeting**  
**August 15<sup>th</sup>**

ATTENTION ALL SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADERS! There will be a meeting for all leaders and substitute leaders on August 15th at 7 pm. We will hand out the Sunday School Calendar as well as the curriculum for 2017-18 (if we have it). Also, we'll go over some other information about the upcoming Sunday school year!

I am looking forward to a great year! Please let Cheryl know if you cannot attend. See you there. Dessert and coffee will be provided.

**Reformation Summer Film Series: Leymah Gbowee**  
**Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm**

As the third and final installment of our Reformation 500th Anniversary Summer Film Series we'll watch "[Pray the Devil Back to Hell](#)," a film chronicling the work of one of the two living Lutheran Nobel Peace Prize Winners, Leymah Gbowee, who led thousands of women - ordinary mothers, grandmothers, aunts and daughters, both Christian and Muslim, in working to end the Second Liberian Civil War in 2003. Pastor Dustin, who has twice personally met Ms. Gbowee, will lead a conversation following the film on how our Lutheran tradition can inspire us to overcome divisiveness, hate and violence. Bring a dish to share for our potluck dinner and all are welcome!

**September Newsletter Articles  
Due  
Monday, August 21<sup>st</sup> at  
10:00am**

Our September Newsletter will be released a little earlier than usual since college will be starting up the following week, so keep a look-out for a reminder email between August 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Worship & Music Committee  
Meeting  
Monday, August 21<sup>st</sup> at  
7:00pm**

Join us as we review our experimental summer services, brainstorm about how to bring more of our community's musical talents into worship and plan for Rally Sunday! Our committee is always looking for new partners in ministry and we'd love to have you join us!

**Property Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> at  
6:00pm**

Join us on Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> for our next Property Committee Meeting! There are tons of things going on and plenty of work to be done. For more information about what will be going on, please speak with Charlie Zitzmann or Rich Stigberg.

**September Newsletter  
Released  
Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>**

This will surely be a big newsletter since a TON of things will be starting back up again!

**Young Adults @ Jumpin Jacks  
Friday, August 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm  
5 Schonowee Ave, Scotia, NY  
12302**

What better way to wrap up the Summer than grabbing some food at a drive-in? Our monthly topic has yet to be picked since it's so far away, but when the time comes closer you will be sure to know. One thing that is certain is that it'll be a great time for all!

**Messiahstock  
Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup> at  
2:00pm to Sunday, August 27<sup>th</sup>  
at 11:00am**

**The Olochnowicz Estate**

Join us for two days of faith, fun and fellowship as we celebrate the summer as a Spirit filled church! Pastor Dustin will lead the congregation in a bunch of family-friendly games and other activities on Saturday afternoon before we settle in for a delicious potluck BBQ dinner and a campfire skit night. Even if you can't join us for camping that night, come on back for a rustic breakfast and outdoor worship! This will be an AWESOME time for the whole family, especially our young people. Check out the sign up sheet on the narthex bulletin board and if you have any questions speak with Kristen Olochnowicz or Pastor Dustin.

**Rianne's Work Hours Change  
Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup> –  
Monday, December 18<sup>th</sup>**

Oh man, the dreaded news. Rianne has a crazy schedule due to having several early morning classes that she

couldn't get out of, so her work hours will be changing. She will be working on Mondays from 8am-3pm and Tuesdays & Thursdays from 4:00-6:30pm. She will always be reachable at office@messiahschenectady.org or via call/text at 518.925.0819.

**Interfaith Community Picnic  
sponsored by Schenectady  
Clergy Against Hate  
Sunday, August 27<sup>th</sup> from  
12:00pm - 4:00pm  
Schenectady Central Park  
Pavilion**

As part of a continued effort to build bridges with folks of different faiths in our community, join Pastor Dustin and other clergy leaders for an awesome back to school picnic in Central Park! We'll have all sorts of delicious foods, fun games and opportunities to learn about different religions. We're all in this together after all, some come help build some community! If you're interested in helping organize this event, please speak with Pastor Dustin.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Rally Sunday:**

Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup> at  
9:00am

September 10<sup>th</sup> is the first day back for the Sunday School kids, as well as Rally Sunday. Service will be outside (weather permitting) and we will have our annual cookout after service. Please plan on that date; sign up will be on the bulletin board in August!

**Messiah Leadership Retreat:**  
Saturday, September 30th from  
9:00am - 1:00pm

## News You Can Use

### Worship Assistant & Bulletin News

In the next coming weeks there will be some changes to the bulletin inserts and Worship Assistant list.

First off, we will have a "Tech Director" role added to the list. That person will be responsible for recording Pastor Dustin's sermon (and perhaps even temple talks) so it can be posted onto Messiah's Facebook page. Rich has been doing the recordings most of the time but there will be days he won't be available and will need coverage. If you'd be interested in helping with this, please speak with Pastor Dustin and put your name down on the worship assistant list out on the bulletin board!

Secondly, have you looked at the bulletin board lately? Pretty swamped with papers and overwhelming, right? We're going to try to change that but it'll take some experimenting! There will soon be bulletin inserts with all upcoming events and checkboxes for you to indicate that you'd like to sign up, with spaces for you to write down additional information (# of people attending, dish you'll bring, that kind of stuff.) Simply put your name on it and throw it in the offering plate; those in charge of events will be notified – easy peasy!

### What in the World? | Schenectady Clergy Against Hate

In recent months you may have heard Pastor Dustin speak about Schenectady Clergy Against Hate or maybe you read about the group the newspaper. While the group started in response to the recent rash of hate crimes and bullying incidents, particularly against our Muslim and Jewish sisters and brothers, the group has been working hard to better define itself and has come up with the Purpose Statement and Goals seen below.

#### PURPOSE

"Schenectady Clergy Against Hate" is a non-partisan, multi-faith and interfaith coalition working to promote harmony, respect, and fellowship in the greater Schenectady area. Together, through sharing our unique and common religious teachings, we seek to foster better understanding of one another. We are compelled through our various traditions to speak out against hatred, bigotry and discrimination on the basis of appearance, race, ethnicity, country of origin, immigration status, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability status or another other identity used to divide us

#### GOALS

- To unify our diverse communities around our shared and common religious values.
- To advocate through our moral and religious teachings for a just and compassionate society.
- To create a unified pastoral voice to speak to our city and community against hatred.
- To confront actions which are rooted in bigotry.
- To promote unity and solidarity through respect and fellowship.
- To educate through our unique religious traditions on issues of conscience.

Want to get more involved? Bring friends and family to the Interfaith Community Picnic in Central Park on August 27th or join us for an evening with Imam Genghis Khan, who will be giving a talk on Islam one weeknight this August (date TBA). Also, the "We're Glad You Are Our Neighbor" banner is an initiative of Schenectady Clergy Against Hate as well. If you have any questions, please speak with Pastor Dustin.

### WELCA Recipe Book

We are looking for your favorite recipe! WELCA will be creating our Messiah Recipe Book! This book will be a Hard Cover, Three Ring Binder with some old favorite recipes and hopefully some new ones! Please print

neatly, limit to 5 recipes per person and forms are due back

by August 13th. **Don't have time to write it up? Drop off your recipe card with your name on it and we will fill it out for you & return your recipe! Coming on sale FALL 2017...**

**Care & Concern**

12 Cards were sent out this month.

**Faith Formation**

The lending library is available in the narthex and we have added the opportunity to borrow the DVDs that the congregation has recently viewed. If you would like to borrow a DVD, please call Jean at 370-3226 or email at dodgerjones@yahoo.com. The summer reading list is also posted in the narthex. The books are *Nervous Condition* by Tsitsi Dangarembga; *The Giver* by Lois Lowry; and *The Book of Joy* by Desmond Tutu and the Dali Lama with Douglas Carlton Abrams. Discussion of these books will be September 26th at 11am.

**Social Action**

At our recent meeting, we had some great discussions about other areas where we might be able to serve. A few of the ideas were, to serve dinners at City Mission, sort food at the Regional Food Bank, and/or be a mentor at the Boys & Girls Club. As the year progresses, we will be considering these volunteering opportunities. Watch the newsletters for further information. We are now official members of the Regional Food Bank. From them, we will be able to order food that is considerably cheaper than the super markets. Hopefully, this will make our money go further. Thanks to the Concerned for the Hungry, we have a \$500 credit at the Food Bank. We

thank you for your donations and constant support. God has certainly blessed our congregation.

**RIC Update**

After a well-attended film screening of "For the Bible Tells Me So," our RIC Taskforce recently met and decided that due to overwhelming support we would like to speed up our timeline for adopting a resolution as congregation that says we welcome folks of all sorts of different identities, including the LGBT community. Thus, in addition to WELCA hosting a Katie Couric film on transgender issues in the fall, we are proposing to vote on the following draft resolution in late September/ early October at a Special Meeting of the Congregation:

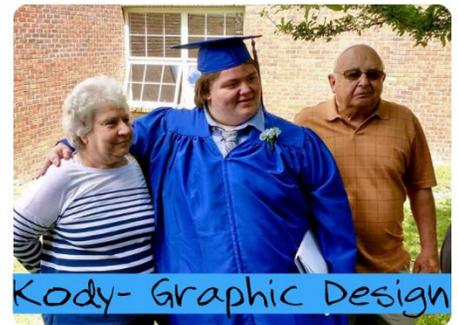
*Messiah Lutheran Church welcomes all people into full participation in the body of Christ without regard to race, nationality, physical ability, marital status, political affiliation, gender identity or sexual orientation.*

If you feel uncomfortable with this resolution or have any questions, we'd love to talk to you! Don't hesitate to speak with Pastor Dustin or any member of our RIC Taskforce: Rich Becker, Merle Longwood, Katie Becker, Cheryl Borski, Dakota Schaffer, Susie Schaffer, Molly Karrel and Barb Hallett.

**Grapevine News**

Sarah Olochnowicz has a cow at a farm in Cobleskill. Her name is Bella and Bella gave birth to a calf last week. Sarah witnessed the whole process and they named him Billy Boy. What a great experience for her. She now says that she is a proud Grandma!!

Congratulations to Messiah's recent high school graduates Amber, Kody, and John! We are all so proud of you!



### Upstate NY Synod Assembly Update

A lot of awesome things happened at the Upstate NY Synod Assembly a couple of weeks ago. We're going to save some of your time and skip over the nitty-gritty amendment and resolution process, but will highlight what may be applicable to all of Messiah's members and friends.

Rev. Dr. Stephen Bouman and Dr. Joy Philip were this year's speakers; they both did an excellent job. The theme of this year's Upstate NY Synod Assembly was accompaniment and I think they both illustrated what accompaniment meant in a beautiful way. To sum it all up, accompaniment is to show up, listen, and engage; not to take pity and demean somebody. I think this can go hand-in-hand with how Messiah is working on the community needs assessment. Some of our members are showing up at meetings with several individuals in the Rotterdam area, listening to what they believe Rotterdam needs, and we (as a church) will use that information to engage with our community. According to Bouman, engaging can be anything from individual acts of mercy, direct services, economic development, advocacy, grassroots mobilization, and beyond.

One workshop was on Multigenerational Faith Formation, which was held by a woman named Linda Staats through her organization called Homegrown Faith. Messiah is doing a pretty good job at intertwining Sunday school along with Sunday Worship; a few of the kids have wanted their own binders with leaguerguides in them since they love to follow the service – that is extremely inspiring. There are also some resources on Linda's website about cross-generational education ideas for All Saints Day and Reformation Sunday; it would be an interesting idea to talk with Sunday School and Adult Ed. to see if maybe they can plan some joint Adult Education/Sunday School activities in the future.

Another notable workshop was held by Judith Roberts, who gave a workshop called "Mission to Become a Multi-Cultural Church". Information about One Body, Many Members is available at <https://www.elca.org/onebody>. According to the website, "One Body, Many Members" is a faith-based journey of discovery to learn, share and proclaim God's intention of oneness among people of every racial, ethnic and class background. How do we find that unity in a world as diverse as ours? How can we build up "one body" as strong as that? These materials will lead you through the lands of race, culture and class in the United States, to meet God every step of the way. You will practice skills you need to know to speak the language of welcome and show actions of caring. You will sense more clearly God's purpose for you in today's world.

Lastly, it was brought to our attention that ELCA World Hunger has a Domestic Hunger Grants Program which awards a \$5,000 grant to help fund projects in advocacy, community development, community-based organizing, and relief that strengthens the foundations of communities affected by hunger and poverty. They would really like to see applications/proposals that have a great focus on addressing the root causes of food insecurity and poverty. (Bread of Life Food Pantry would qualify!) The application period is over with for this year, we need to keep in mind that there are grants all over the place for congregations just like ours to take advantage of to help improve Messiah and support all of our amazing ministries. Perhaps we could apply next year!

## SUMMER MINISTER OF THE MONTH: Rianne Johnson

Upon returning back to her home state of New York after living in Maine for nearly ten years, Rianne stumbled upon Messiah in January 2016 and quickly found herself becoming immersed in her new faith community. Rianne joined Messiah in May 2016 as their Parish Administrator through their newly developed Messiah Builds Leaders program, eager to help fulfill the congregation's mission of being "a Spirit-filled church following Jesus Christ". Additionally, Rianne enjoys taking care of her dogs Bella and Cooper as well five rats Mouse, Sven, Olaf, Stuart, and Maurice; going on light hikes; weightlifting; reading; PC gaming; building computers; tutoring college students; and spending time with friends and family. Rianne will be starting Nursing School at Hudson Valley Community College this coming Fall.



In Rianne's short time with us, she's attended synod and conference assemblies, greatly grown our Young Adult Group, strengthened our Outreach Ministries and helped so many of us with countless tasks. Rianne is also attending the Bridging the Urban/Rural Divide Conference and Hartwick Seminary this summer as she continues to grow in her faith and leadership skills. She's also thinking of becoming a Conference Deacon. Thanks so much Rianne for all you do!!!!

### PASTOR'S LETTER: REV. DUSTIN G. WRIGHT

*"We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light." - Martin Luther in the Small Catechism*

Over the past few months, gosh, I've been absolutely overjoyed in all the ways we're working hard at Messiah to better welcome our neighbors and strengthen our community. I think of the incredible ministry Jim & Jeannette Miller are doing as part of the Rotterdam Neighborhood Watch's "National Night Out" for instance, and all our Reconciling in Christ Taskforce is doing to

better welcome LGBT folks into our Spirit filled church. In one week this past month, we had THREE community events! Our WELCA Community Book Sale, a Reformation Film Night and our Annual Ice Cream Social, all which worked to build community. Late this August, I'm happy to announce Schenectady Clergy Against Hate will be sponsoring an Interfaith Community Picnic in Central Park and I hope many folks from Messiah can attend!

In the times we live, perhaps more than ever, the Spirit is at work inviting us to truly see Christ in the face of our neighbors, all of them! And thanks be to God for that!

God's peace,  
Pastor Dustin

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dustin G. Wright".