

# *Light in the Beartooths*

MESSIAH LUTHERAN NEWS

**Pastor Ben Cherland**



## **CHRISMON SYMBOLS**

Chrismons originated at Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, Virginia in 1957 and have been adapted by churches of many denominations to be used at Christmas to remind us of God's Son Jesus Christ. The word *Chrismon* is derived from "Christ Monogram." Chrismons are religious symbols representing many aspects of the Christian faith. Chrismons are traditionally white (the liturgical color of Christmas and Easter that signifies joy and holiness) and gold (representing the glory, majesty and kingship of Jesus.)

December, 2023

Dear Messiah,

The silence around church all these days between Sundays that Dianne and I experienced for our first few months in the new building was rather pronounced. That silence dimmed remarkably when The Meadowlark Children's Center opened its doors. Whatever silence that remained evaporated this week. Chime rehearsals, chair and tables being set up and moved around, donations for Christmas Kids Shoppe streaming in, tree decorating, Holden Evening Prayer rehearsals (The liturgy we'll be using during Advent), people with questions, and yes, baby's and toddlers all added to the din of church as Christmas approaches.

This is a joyful thing, dear ones. Life lives at Messiah - perhaps this time of year especially. But what I hear in all the activity here this week is an expression of what has been building for the last 8 months. Life! In all the mess, the decorating, the wailing, the working out of worship details and the coming and going of helpers and organizers, we are living into the call of God in this new place, and this week it's taking noisy form! I want you to hear that, dear friends, and to listen for it.

But all this activity is also a reflection of what our Western Culture is doing this time of year too. Christmas shopping ads on every radio and tv station have been the background noise of households since long before Thanksgiving. Christmas ceased to be magical for many of us when children came on the scene, and then Christmas became a production to make it magical for this next generation. Presents need buying, relatives need to know when they're coming or going or hosting, schedules need to be made, decorations! Tactical plans for wresting Christmas into submission by December 24th has taken our focus this time of year.

As I said in a summer sermon though, behind the noise in our heads, in our homes and around us this season, the silence remains. We take a sincere and fairly serious approach to Advent in our worship here at Messiah. There is fun and festivity to be sure, but in the midst of it we seek to help each other deepen our experience of the quieting walk toward Christmas. And if there's anything I've learned from our Meadowlark friends, it's that babies need quiet, if only to fill it with their dulcet, babbling (shrieking?) tones.

So this Christmas, I wish you luck with all that you have to do. But more than that, I hope you gradually descend from the holiday high and eventually find a quieting pace that leads you through the noise to a most silent night.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pastor Ben". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. The word "Pastor" is written in a smaller, more uniform script, while "Ben" is written in a larger, more expressive cursive.

Our tree in the sanctuary is decorated with chrismons, many of which were lovingly made by our good friend, Karen Young. Below you can read about the meaning of the different Chrismons.

## CHRISMON SYMBOLS

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The Latin or Roman Cross is the most recognized Christian symbol and represents the crucifixion.



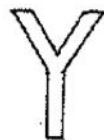
The Calvary Cross is a Latin Cross standing on three steps which represent Faith, Hope, and Love.



The Celtic Cross is a Latin Cross with a circle, representing eternity.



The Triumphant Cross is a Latin Cross on top of a circle. The circle represents the earth with a latitude and a longitude line. The Cross on top reminds us that Jesus is triumphant over the challenges of the world.



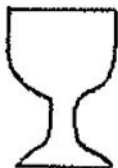
The Upsilon Cross or Furca is taken from the Greek letter Y. It is also called the Thieves' Cross from the two robbers who were crucified on each side of Jesus. The two forks also represent the choice between good and evil.



The Tau Cross and Serpent is a sign of salvation from John 3:14 "And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life." It is also a symbol of Jesus as Healer.



The Angel reminds us of the angels who told the shepherds of Jesus' birth. It can also represent the second coming of Jesus, which the Bible says will begin with an angel blowing a trumpet.



The Chalice is a symbol of Communion and also represents God's forgiveness.



The Butterfly is a symbol for resurrection, transformation and immortality. A chrysalis symbolizes the death of the caterpillar, which then springs forth in beautiful new life.



The Grapes represent Communion and Christ's saying "I am the vine, you are the branches."



The Cross and Chi are two Chis superimposed. The Chi in the normal "X" position represents the first letter in the Greek word for Christ. The second Chi in the cross position represents the crucifixion.



The Lamb is a frequent image of the Messiah in both the Old and New Testaments.



The Manger is a reminder of the humble birth of Jesus.



The Lamp represents Jesus as the Light of the World.

*Prepared in Advent 2012 by Mintha Bennie for the Worship Committee of Highland Presbyterian Church, Winston-Salem, NC*

## Meadowlark Tweets

Hello church family!

Thanks for all your support with our cookie dough fundraiser! We raised over \$400 dollars in just two weeks and all of it is going toward our Tuition Assistance Fund. This month, we're holding strong with six kiddos enrolled, they're starting to get ready to walk, talk, and stand and we love being able to celebrate all these milestones with you all.

Megan Strong

Early Childhood Education Director



We are making up a new Directory with photos!

If you have not yet had your picture taken for the directory , please contact Kevin Kinzley at 605-431-9889 and he will make an appointment for you at his studio. Just tell him you are from Messiah. There will be no cost to you unless you decide you would like to purchase some prints from Kevin.

### KIDS CHRISTMAS SHOPPE—2023

The Kids Christmas Shoppe will be held this year at Messiah on December 2nd from 9 am to 3 pm.



December, 2023

## SPECIAL OFFERINGS

Each month Messiah Lutheran supports a designated charity. If you would like to contribute to this cause, please designate “special offering” on your check or with your online gift.



### December 2023 SPECIAL OFFERING

Each month Messiah Lutheran supports a designated charity. If you would like to contribute to this cause, please designate “special offering” on your check or with your online gift.

Our special offering for December supports the Freedom in Christ Prison Ministry at Montana State Prison in Deer Lodge. This mission is widely supported by Montana Synod – individuals, congregations, the Synod Office, and Churchwide. Even so,

funding over the past three years has dwindled placing the Ministry at risk. Freedom in Christ has called Pastor Marlow Carels to take over after Pastor Rob’s retirement. Board members have been asked to take on some of the fund raising efforts.

Putting dollar issues aside, the Ministry remains incredibly important as a resource that inmates turn to for support, guidance, and spiritual renewal. Transforming Corrections published a study in 2017, **The Impact of a Volunteer Prison Ministry Program on the Long-term Recidivism of Federal Inmates**, that showed that recidivism rates dropped by 21% for inmates engaged in Prison Ministry. For women, older inmates, and low risk offenders, the rates dropped by nearly 60%. There is virtually no ELCA presence in the Women’s Prison in Billings and Montana Synod has the most involvement of the mainline Protestant denominations in the Men’s Prison. FIC hopes to engage with the Women’s Prison in the next two years if more consistent funding is established.

The Men’s Prison houses nearly 1,600 inmates and has their own issues with staffing and funding from the state. Visitor access has been dramatically curtailed leaving inmates with little or no contact with the ‘outside world’. FIC tries to fill some of that void.

Please keep FIC in your prayers and consider donating to this month’s special offering.

*“We have operated in the Montana State Prison for ten years and the recidivism of our guys is low, which coincides with statistics showing that faith ministries inside prisons (and re-entry programs) reduce the return to prison by 80%.”*



**That is good news! That is why we do what we do!**

December, 2023

## MESSIAH MAKES MERRY FEAST & FELLOWSHIP

Join fellow Messiah friends of all ages on Sunday, December 17 at 6:00 pm for a festive night including good conversation around the tables, a delicious meal provided by The Wild Table, and the singing of some holiday favorites.

The menu is:

Spaghetti & Meatballs

Green Salad

Garlic Bread

Dessert

The cost of this catered meal is \$15 per adult with half price for children elementary and younger. Reservations are necessary (no later than noon Friday, December 15) to assure sufficient food. Sign up at church, phone the office, or phone/text Martha at (239) 643-3027.

Don't miss this night of fellowship and merriment! Dessert

The cost of this catered meal is \$15 per adult with half price for children elementary and younger. Reservations are necessary (no later than noon Friday, December 15) to assure sufficient food. Sign up at church, phone the office, or phone/text Martha at (239) 643-3027.

Don't miss this night of fellowship and merriment!



## Christikon Clips

**December 2023**



As we move into the dark days of winter,  
and in the midst of a world weary of brokenness and war, we look yet again  
towards the promise of the coming Christ child. As the gospel writer proclaims,  
"The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it."  
Shine, Jesus, shine...in our hearts and homes, our community and world.  
A blessed Advent and Christmas to you and yours from your Christikon family.

**It is the mission of Christikon to awaken and nurture faith in Christ—  
exploring God's creation and the adventure of life together.**

**CHRISTIKON** • 1108 24<sup>th</sup> Street West • Billings, MT 59102  
406 656-1969 • [secretary@christikon.org](mailto:secretary@christikon.org) • [www.christikon.org](http://www.christikon.org)



## THIS MONTH AT MESSIAH

Fri Dec 1 | 8:00pm

**Messiah Chimes at The Pollard**

Sat Dec 2 | 9:00am-3:00pm

**Christmas Kids Shoppe (Ages 4-11)**

*Children choose up to 5 family gifts, free of charge.*

7:30pm

**Messiah Chimes at The Pollard**

Sun Dec 3 | 10:00am

**Advent I Worship, Sunday School, Coffee**

Wed Dec 6 | Noon

**Advent Readings & Prayers,**

**Soup & Bread Lunch**

Sat Dec 9 | 5:00-9:00pm

**Children's Advent Pajama Party**

*Kids (ages 4-11) Parents Night Out Pizza, Games, Crafts, Movie*

Sun Dec 10 | 10:00am

**Advent II Worship, Sunday School, Coffee**

Wed Dec 13 | Noon

**Advent Readings & Prayers,**

**Soup & Bread Lunch**

Sun Dec 17 | 10:00am

**Advent III Worship, Sunday School, Coffee**

6:00pm

**Messiah Makes Merry Feast & Fellowship**

*Spaghetti, Meatballs, Salad, Garlic Bread, and Dessert*

*from The Wild Table*

*\$15 Adults; Elementary & Younger 1/2 Price.*

*Fun singing and a good time around the tables.*

*Reservations Required Phone/Text Martha 239-643-3027*

*or sign up at church no later than Friday, December 15 at noon.*

Wed Dec 20 | Noon

**Advent Readings & Prayers, Soup & Bread**

Sun Dec 24 | 10:00am

**Advent IV Worship, Sunday School, Coffee**

5:00pm

**Christmas Eve Worship**

*Candlelight, Carols, Communion*



Open Doors and Hearts Await You

## COUNCIL CORNER

Council met on Tuesday, November 21. Highlights are below.

The congregation passed the proposed 2024 budget on November 19. We will be watching spending very closely in 2024 as it will be our first full year in operation in the new building. Pledged contributions, a good estimate of non-designated income, along with income from Meadowlark Childrens Center, puts us right where we need to be. Pledged amounts for the MIF loan came in higher than our mortgage payments will be for this year, so we hope to reduce principal at the end of next year and shorten the life of the loan.

Holden Evening Prayer will be used for Advent. Please see Advent article for details on the times and needs.

Council set the annual meeting date to February 4.

Fun things going in Family Life: Pajama party, Messiah Makes Merry Dinner. See newsletter articles for more information

Getting bids for exterior cross.

We are ready for the kids at our annual Christmas Kids Shoppe, held on Dec. 2.

We are working on getting a shed put up for outdoor equipment and to share with MCC.

Bishop Laurie will be worshipping with us on January 20th.

Council will NOT be meeting in December and will resume meetings in January.



Children have Sunday School with Martha Crofts during adult worship.

## ADVENT

The season of Advent begins on December 3rd. Sunday Advent services will be at 10:00 am in the sanctuary at Messiah. We will be doing the Holden Evening Prayer Liturgy.

Midweek Advent services will be on Wednesdays at Messiah with Devotions at noon followed by a soup lunch.

Break out your favorite soup recipes and volunteer to bring soup to share.

T

The 4th Sunday of Advent falls on Christmas Eve. Morning worship will be at 10:00 am. Christmas Eve service will be at 5:00 pm.



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



12/8 Alex Elsberry

12/14 Michael Mullaney

Allen Hansen

12/15 Suzi Hansen

12/16 Laurie Grygiel

12/30 Dan Elsberry

## Cotton flannel sheets and yardage are still needed

We are collecting cotton flannel sheets and yardage for Pastor Schauer's wife, LeeAnn, to be made into diapers for Lutheran World Relief. Sheets can be used and stained because they will be cut up and the unusable parts will be discarded. Let's see if we can help out with this very worthy endeavor.

Messiah Charity Quilters would love your help from 1pm—3 pm each Monday. Everything is provided except your sewing needle and a pair of scissors. We will teach you what you need to know.



## MESSIAH CHIMES GLORIA

Nothing says Gloria like the ringing of bells unless it's enhanced with singing! Stop by The Pollard Hemingway Room for Stroll either Friday at 8:00 or Saturday at 7:30 to help represent Messiah with your carol singing voices.



## BOOK CLUB

Date: 12/7/2023

Time: 11:30 am

Book: Great Christmas Bowl

Author: Susan Warren

Facilitator: Marla Ebel

Location: Roberts Cafe

Contact host, Marla Ebel, at 406-664-3178 for more information.

As more and more people are using the church, please check in with the office before you schedule a meeting to be sure your desired meeting time is available.

Thank you!

# Messiah Church Council

P.O. Box 1330 912 Lower Continental Dr.

Red Lodge, MT 59068

Church: (406) 446-2430

Church email: [redlodgemessiah@gmail.com](mailto:redlodgemessiah@gmail.com)

Pastor's email: [pastorbencherland@gmail.com](mailto:pastorbencherland@gmail.com)

Website: [www.redlodgemessiah.com](http://www.redlodgemessiah.com)

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Pastor	Ben Cherland	646-708-1389c	<a href="mailto:pastorbencherland@gmail.com">pastorbencherland@gmail.com</a>
President	Linda Daily	406-426-0841c	<a href="mailto:lindatodd94@yahoo.com">lindatodd94@yahoo.com</a>
Vice President	Rob Mettes	972-922-9909	<a href="mailto:rmettes@live.com">rmettes@live.com</a>
Secretary	Brooke Flynn	406-656-7593	<a href="mailto:flynnquilts@gmail.com">flynnquilts@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Kim Elsberry	406-425-0967	<a href="http://kelsberrybresnan.net">kelsberrybresnan.net</a>
Education	Martha Crofts	239-643-3027c	<a href="mailto:marthacrofts@gmail.com">marthacrofts@gmail.com</a>
Family Life	Marla Ebel	406-426-8277c 406-664-3178	<a href="mailto:dmebel@live.com">dmebel@live.com</a>
Outreach	Barb Ostrum	406-446-4121	<a href="mailto:hobin727@gmail.com">hobin727@gmail.com</a>
Property	Lavonne Ervin	406-446-3086	N/A
Stewardship	Allen Hansen	508-269-0925c	
Worship	Dianne Milleson	406-425-3222	<a href="mailto:dmille46@gmail.com">dmille46@gmail.com</a>

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## Other Important Contact Information

Financial Secretary	Donna Downing	406-425-3031c	<a href="mailto:downing.donna@gmail.com">downing.donna@gmail.com</a>
Bookkeeper	Vickie Elfering	406-425-1952c	<a href="mailto:vickieelfering@gmail.com">vickieelfering@gmail.com</a>
Computer	Gwen Williams	406-425-2401	(Text Gwen Only)

December, 2023

**Every Tuesday**

**Women's Bible Study**

**10:00 a.m.**

**Contact Martha Crofts, 239-643-3027**

**or**

**Marla Ebel, 406-664-3178**

**for more information**

## *Ongoing Prayer Concerns*

Lowell Anderson, Emma Balsam, Manuel Cabanas,  
Jackie Cordill, Lenny Erickson, Brooke Feister,  
Jesse Graves, Andrea Holmen, Jim & Dolly Koski,  
Rick & Sandy Koski, Jim & Linda Lian,  
Lois Miller, Shilo Moncada & Kingston,  
Dick & DJ Rosekelly,  
Al & Dolly Stuber,

### **PRAYER REQUESTS**

For prayer requests, contact the church office at  
406-446-2430 or [redlodgemessiah@gmail.com](mailto:redlodgemessiah@gmail.com)  
with specific information and permission from the person you are adding.

# Messiah Calendar—November, 2023

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>
					1 Christmas Stroll	2 Christmas Kids Shoppe  Christmas Stroll
3 Sing through Hymns 9:15 am Worship 10:00 am	4 Great Books 9:30 am Quilters 1:00 pm	5	6 Advent Noon Devotions Soup Lunch	7	8	9 Kids Pajama Party 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm
10 Sing through Hymns 9:15 am Worship 10:00 am	11 Great Books 9:30 am Quilters 1:00 pm	12 Hospice Noon	13 Advent Noon Devotions Soup Lunch	14	15	16
17 Sing through Hymns 9:15 am Worship 10:00 am  Spaghetti Feast 6:00 pm	18 Great Books 9:30 am Quilters 1:00 pm	19	20 Advent Noon Devotions Soup Lunch	21	22	23
24 Sing through Hymns 9:15 am Worship 10:00 am  Christmas Eve Service 5:00 pm	25 	26 	27	28	29	30
31 Sing through Hymns 9:15 am Worship 10:00 am						

December, 2023

**Messiah's Mission:**

***“Live by Faith, Share Christ's Love, Be a Voice of Hope”***

**HOW TO CONTACT US AND STAY IN TOUCH:**

**Office Hours: Administrative:** Mon-Thurs. 11 am - 3 pm

**Messiah Lutheran Church** phone: 406-446-2430

**Administrative Assistant, Dianne Milleson's cell phone:**

**406-425-3222**

**Pastor's Office Hours:**

Monday: 9:00-4:00

Tuesday : 9:00-4:00

Wednesday: 9:00-3:00

Thursday: **OFF**

Friday: 9:00-4:00

Saturday: 12:00-4:00

Sunday: 8:00-12:00

**Pastor's Cell Phone: 646-708-1389**

**Church Address:** P.O. Box 1330

912 Lower Continental Dr.

Red Lodge, MT 59068

**Website:** [www.redlodgemessiah.com](http://www.redlodgemessiah.com)

**Facebook:** Messiah Lutheran

**Email: General:** [redlodgemessiah@gmail.com](mailto:redlodgemessiah@gmail.com)

**Prayer Requests:** [redlodgemessiah@gmail.com](mailto:redlodgemessiah@gmail.com)

**Pastor Ben:** [pastorbencherland@gmail.com](mailto:pastorbencherland@gmail.com)

**Sunday Worship Service:**

**10:00 a.m. Worship**



**In an effort to make Messiah comfortable and welcoming for everyone we ask that you refrain from using strong personal scents or perfumes.**

**Thank you.**

