



*Messiah Lutheran Church*

*Red Lodge, Montana*

# **MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH**

***Light in the Beartooths ~ Red Lodge, MT***

***Pastor Ben Cherland***

**March 2022 Newsletter**





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# *Light in the Beartooths*

MESSIAH LUTHERAN NEWS

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Dear Messiah,

This edition of the Messiah Lutheran Church Newsletter is late! My sincerest apologies to all of you. Melinda made a professional move in late January to a rare and sudden offer she couldn't refuse. We are sincerely happy for her and grateful for her continued involvement and presence.

That said, adjusting to the office and administrative life of Messiah in her absence has been tricky, as you can imagine. It turns out that March 1 would have been the two year anniversary of Melinda beginning at Messiah. So for this reason, I'd like to take this opportunity to lift up two things I observed about Melinda in the two years we shared an office.

The role she played in the life of this church since her hire is much larger than you might suspect. In addition to performing the basic duties of the position (weekly bulletins, monthly newsletters, communications with parishioners, and answering the phones), she took on some of the book-keeping, she cleaned the church once a week, she collaborated with me in all manner of things related to church, and she built anew website for Messiah (!). And that's not all! Having been on the job one month when I walked in the door for my first day, Melinda was among the first to welcome me: An unseasoned pastor with zero experience working with a professional assistant! Melinda put up with my learning, and she did so gracefully. As well, her curiosity about the faith and dedication to learning to support us in our experience of it was motivating, inspiring, and generous. She contributed whole-heartedly to the functioning of her church and this pastor. And her general presence in the office added so much for me in this prolonged experience of isolation. What we owe her as a church we could never hope to repay.

But, as many of you may have, I also observed her growth as a person. The woman I met when I first walked in back in April 2020 was not the same one who bid farewell to this job in late January. She developed, evolved - not only as a person but as a Christian - a faithful disciple of Christ. By God's grace we watched her become more fully who God made her to be, and for this we give thanks to God. For your faithful, dedicated, important work and for your sheer generosity of spirit, we thank you Melinda. You left this place and this pastor in far better shape than we could have asked for. For the impact you leave and your continued presence and practice with us, we rejoice. On behalf of Messiah, God bless you in all your future endeavors.

Pastor Ben

## A Time for a Reset

In the first seven chapters of Genesis, we move quickly from the glory of creation to disobedience, expulsion from the garden and fratricide to the wickedness of humankind. We read, “The Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5). God’s beautiful creation, in harmony with itself and its creator, had gone completely off the rails. God had given the creation as a gift—and the gift was rejected. Time for a reset.

“And the Lord was sorry that he had made humankind on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said, ‘I will blot out from the earth the human beings I have created—people together with animals and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry I have made them’” (Genesis 6:6-7). Then, in chapter 7, we get the flood.

This is a story of God’s deep and terrible pain. We were created by love for love. And now this terrible betrayal moves God to destroy God’s own precious creation. Another part of this tragedy is that human disobedience and arrogance resulted in the destruction of creation. It is too deep for me to understand the depth of God’s horror when beholding how twisted humankind had become and God’s agony in sending the flood.

Some days—or if I am honest, many days—I want to press the reset button. We are still stuck in this pandemic. The whole world is anxious and angry and grieving. And though the world is living through this together, not all people are affected equally. Some (I among them) have access to vaccines, medical care, a safe home in which to shelter and the privilege of working from home. And this is just one pandemic.

There is the continuing pandemic of racial inequity. When I say the Pledge of Allegiance, I want to believe that we are a people “with liberty and justice for all.” Whether we see the racial inequities laid bare, feel freedom threatened by mask and vaccine mandates, or see voting rights threatened—all positions voiced by members of this church—it is painfully clear that we aren’t living up to that pledge. There are societal forces that seek to tear us apart and set us against each other. And as I write this, Russia [is] invading Ukraine and plunging Europe into war.

Over and over again humankind has betrayed the hope God has for us. God declared the creation very good. We have fallen short. This must certainly be a time for a reset. I can think about how I would reset. Many others in our church who have been wounded by society, and even the ELCA, would have legitimate cases for what needs to be reset. And I wonder, if all of us simultaneously pressed the reset button, would that cancel all of us out?

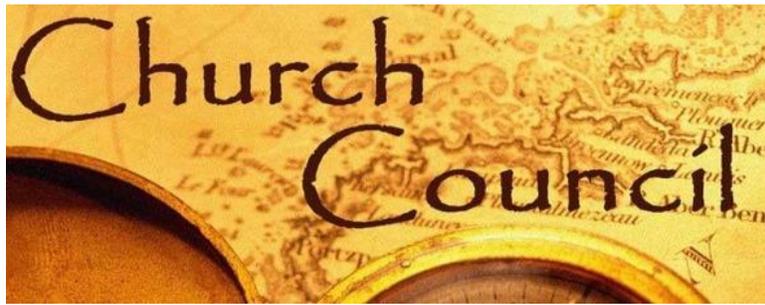
And God said to Noah, “I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth (Genesis 9:11). The rainbow, interestingly, is the sign of this covenant with all of creation, a rainbow that only comes after a storm. This is God’s reset.

We are in a storm. In no way would I minimize nor silence the real pain experienced by our people. But I want to hold out the truth and the promise of God’s ultimate reset—the death and resurrection of Jesus. In this act of redemption, God has brought about the reconciliation of all people and of all creation. This reset, though not completely realized, gives us a way to speak and hear truth from one another.

Jesus said, “You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” (John 8:32)



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***Church Council met on February 15th. Highlights are below. Full meeting minutes and financials can be found on the bulletin board.***

- Plans are being finalized for Lent/Easter. Midweek services with soup supper will be held starting the Wednesday after Ash Wednesday
- Council elected Kim Elsberry and Donna Downing as Treasure/Financial Secretary, respectively
- We are still looking to fill our Administrative Assistant position
- Awarded \$500 per year to Rikki Poore through the Tjeltveit Scholarship.
- Approved Builder's Risk Insurance amount
- Reviewed Hetzel Foundation Grant we are applying for in order to fund new AV Technology in the new building.

***We meet again March 15th at 4:30 PM***



***Fragrance Free Zone***

Please help us to accommodate those who are chemically sensitive to fragrances and other scented products.

**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.**

***If you have something you'd like to be included in our monthly newsletter, please send an email to [redlodgemessiah@gmail.com](mailto:redlodgemessiah@gmail.com) with the blurb you want included, no later than the 25th of the month.***



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## Building Update

Exterior materials have all been chosen. You can find samples on the board in the back of the Sanctuary. A forum was held to dream about what the Sanctuary will look like and some modifications are being made to the plans to incorporate wall sconces. The team made the decision to remove the very costly moveable glass wall between the sanctuary and gathering space which also allows us to use a fire alarm system vs a sprinkler system, also saving money. We continue to explore cost saving ideas as well as choosing interior products such as the pendant lights for the Sanctuary. Small groups are making progress on their topics.

### Women's Safari Book Club

**Date:** March 17th

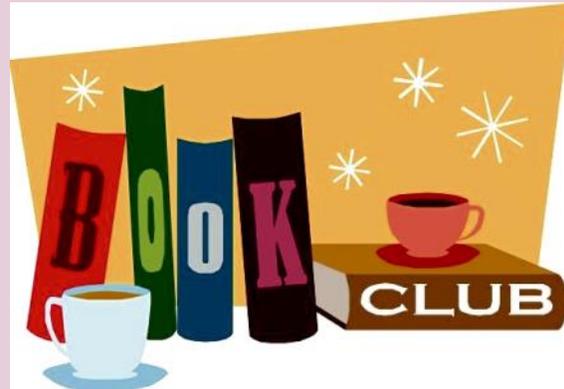
**Time:** 3:00 PM (Ongoing until Spring)

**Book:** The Indigo Girl

**Author:** Natasha Boyd

**Facilitator:** Marla Ebel

**Location:** Mary Ames' house



*Contact host, Marla Ebel, at 426-8277 if you need more info*



## How We Worship Together Safely

**With our eyes on local case numbers, we are relaxing restrictions but prepared to take them up again if needed.**

- **Masks are suggested but not required**
- **The vaccine and the booster are highly recommended**
- **Washing hands regularly and often, even and especially at church, is strongly encouraged**
- \* **If you feel unwell in any way, or uncomfortable being here in person, please stay home (Zoom is available)**

**We truly all share the responsibility for the health of our community.**

**Peace be with you, Pastor Ben**

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## March Special Offering:



### St. John's United

St. John's United is pleased to be a leader in senior living and a provider of human services across the whole arc of life. From independent to assisted living, outpatient physical therapy to transitional care, pregnancy support to adoption; we offer our community a variety of services to meet their changing needs. At St. John's we aspire to champion your best life possible, believing that every person has **SO MUCH LIFE TO LIVE!** Our commitment to quality care for seniors, families, and children is why we are the most well-known provider for senior living and human services in the region.

**Home** is where you are. In addition to our established senior living communities, we extend our services off campus to meet you and your loved ones with the support and resources you need. This support is facilitated by our nearly 700 qualified staff members and a network of volunteers. Wherever you choose to live, we help you live your life with confidence.

**Health** is personal to everyone. We serve and support individuals through health and wellness services offered at our St. John's United locations or at your home. Our residents and off campus community are provided with rehabilitation and transitional care, outpatient and occupational physical therapy, speech therapy, and catered living. St. John's is committed to meeting your health-care needs and accompanying you toward wellness.

**Family** unites us all. Our family services staff focuses on meeting the needs of every generation, from child daycare to pregnancy support and counseling to adoption services. At St. John's United, we also offer childcare and spiritual guidance to families in times of transition. We want the future to be bright for every age, from childhood through senior living. That is why we provide services to help all who come to us for care. Our goal is to help and heal.

**Join us March 13th after worship for a special presentation by President of the St. John's Foundation, Pastor Tom Schlotterback.**



We have a BEAUTIFUL new website! Look it up, go through it, and let Pastor Ben know what you think - [redlodgemessiah.com](http://redlodgemessiah.com) An important way to support this website is by taking pictures at church and sharing them with Pastor Ben. A good website helps people find their way to us, but a good website is only as good as its pictures: They tell the story of who we are better - especially pictures of people. For all the wonderful things to read on our website, pictures will draw the eye and tell the story of who Messiah is far better than words.

So start seeing events at church, including worship, through the eyes of a photographer and maybe start taking a few pictures. You don't need a fancy camera - if you have one, a smart phone can take great pictures. If you don't want your picture taken, contact the office and let us know.

The more pictures we have, the better our website will become, and the more people we'll begin to reach, welcoming them into the story of God happening at Messiah.



Messiah is in search of a new **Administrative Assistant**. Our dear Melinda has accepted a position to manage the apartment buildings where she lives. This is an amazing opportunity for her. She is excited to continue to be a part of Messiah as a member.

Do you know anyone looking for a flexible part time job? The position is for 16 hours/week and starts at \$12.50/hour. Please share this information with anyone who might be interested.

Inquiries can be sent to [redlodgemessiah@gmail.com](mailto:redlodgemessiah@gmail.com)

MARCH 2022

# Bible Study



**Every Tuesday**  
**Women's Group**  
**at Messiah**

**10:00 a.m. In person and  
online via Zoom**

**Contact Andrea Holmen if  
interested**

## *Ongoing Prayer Concerns*

Lowell Anderson  
Marphel Ballentine  
Russ Born  
Manuel Cabanas  
Amy Crane  
Lenny Erickson  
Brooke Feister  
Larry Fry

Mike Gasparro  
Nathan Green  
Andrea Holmen  
Jim Johnson  
Jim Koski  
Rick Koski  
Sandy Koski  
Neil Laird  
Ray Loyning

The family of Tallu Quinn  
Kenneth Rich  
James "Bud" Ridenour  
Dick Rosekelly  
DJ Rosekelly  
Julie Schweitzer  
Josh Wilker  
Jim Zenz



### **PRAYER REQUESTS**

**For prayer requests, contact the church office at  
446-2430 or [messiahprayers@gmail.com](mailto:messiahprayers@gmail.com)**

**with specific information and permission from the person you are adding.**



3/1	Pastor Kim	3/19	Jack Prather
3/1	Martha Crofts	3/20	Molly Kreatz
3/4	Denny Chatlain		Terri Wilker
3/5	Kirsten Cabanas-Holmen		Ann Christ
3/7	Joe Johnson		Felicity Cramer
	Gloria Hardy	3/21	Alex Thuesen
3/8	Judy Streets	3/25	Bob Holmen
3/10	Jim Kyner	3/26	Josh Wilker
3/13	Liam Gildehaus	3/29	Robert Leaverton
3/14	Jeremy Shields	3/30	Stan Farnham



**3/01 Pastor Kim and Terri Wilker**

**306 Herb and Myrna Hunt**

Josh Wilker's birthday is March 26th. If you wish to send a card, his address is below. Please note: No inserted notes in card, no glitter or glue, and envelope must have complete return address.

Josh Wilker  
1327547  
WMC

## Christikon Clips

March, 2022

*Information for our Congregations*



Christikon is an extension your congregation's ministry.

**Bus Attendants needed for 2022**– Would you or someone you know be willing to ride with youth on their way to Christikon? Yes? Please call Kerry in the office at 406-656-1969 or email at [secretary@christikon.org](mailto:secretary@christikon.org) for details. It pays a daily rate as well!

**Don't miss out on the Early Registration Discount for youth campers: Register by April 1<sup>st</sup> and save \$25 in any youth session.** If you don't have the camp brochure mailed to you, pick one up at the church, or register online.

**Adults and families: Check out the special focus** for each of the family/adult weekends next summer at Christikon: work projects, faith formation, and Bible study will be woven together with worship, meal fellowship, re-creation, folk dancing and much more. Check out camping for adults and families online at [www.christikon.org](http://www.christikon.org).

**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)

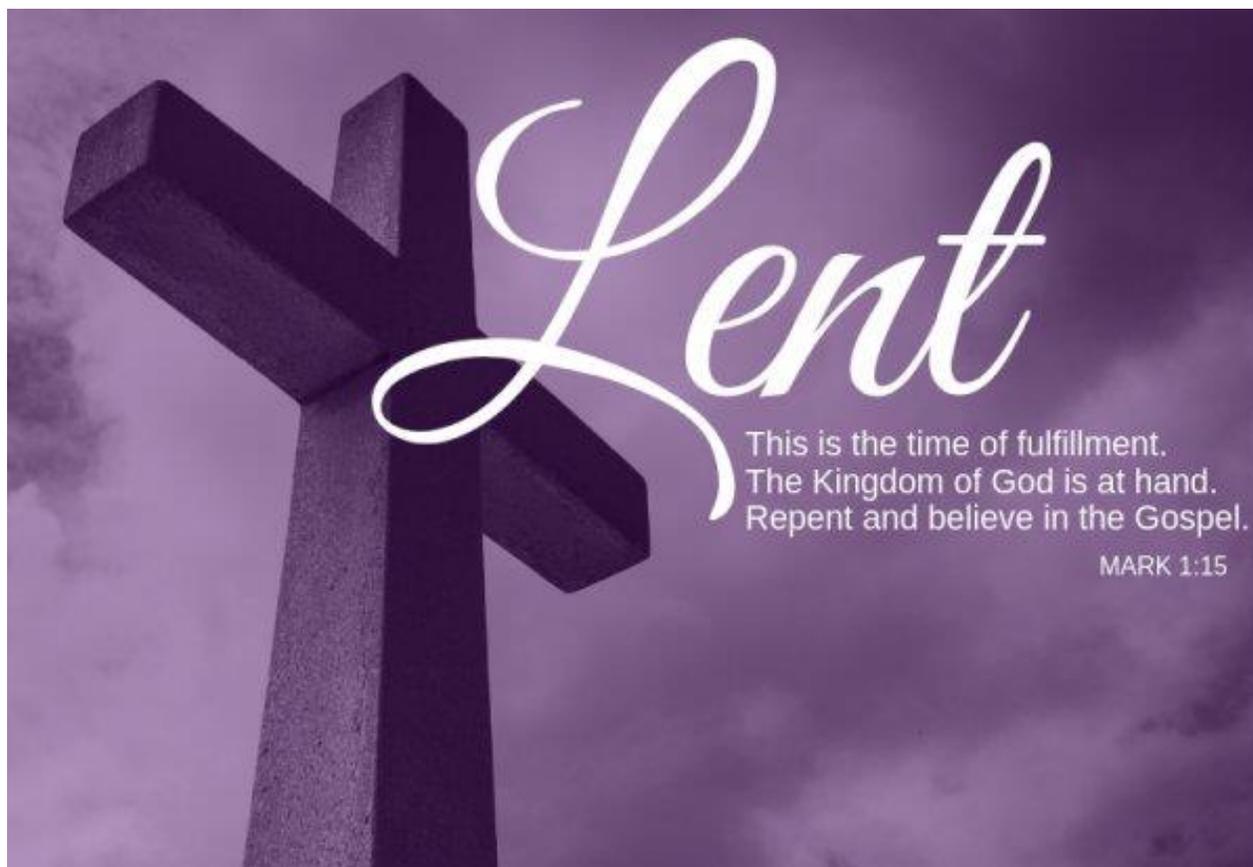
# Messiah Calendar—March

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>
		1 10:00 AM Women's Bible Study	2  Ash Wednesday 6:00 pm	3  Bridge lessons 10a-2p	4	5
6 9:30 AM Worship  Lent I	7	8 10:00 AM Women's Bible Study  Building Committee Meeting 4:00 PM	9  Lenten Evening Soup & Service 6:00 pm	10  Bridge lessons 10a-2p	11	12
13 9:30 AM Worship Lent II	14	15 10:00 AM Women's Bible Study  Council Meeting 4:30pm	16  Lenten Evening Soup & Service 6:00 pm	17  Bridge lessons 10a-2p  Safari Book Club 3:00pm	18	19
20 9:30 AM Worship Lent III	21	22 10:00 AM Women's Bible Study  Building Committee Meeting 4:00 PM	23  Lenten Evening Soup & Service 6:00 pm	24  Bridge lessons 10a-2p	25	26
27 9:30 AM Worship Lent IV	28	29	30  Lenten Evening Soup & Service 6:00 pm	31  Bridge lessons 10a-2p		

MARCH 2022

**Messiah's Mission:**

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



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

**Church Office: 406-446-2430**

**Office Hours: Administrative: Mon-Thurs. 9-1**

**Pastor's Office Hours:**

Monday: 9:00-4:00

Tuesday : 9:00-4:00

Wednesday: 9:00-3:00 (Text Study 10:00-11:30)

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:** 723 S. Adams  
P.O. Box 1330  
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:** [messiahprayers@gmail.com](mailto:messiahprayers@gmail.com)

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

**Sunday Worship Service:**  
9:30 AM



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***Red Lodge***

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