

# "Messiah Messenger"

ISSUE #27

JULY 2025

*"Thanking God for the Partnership!"*

*"I thank my God in all of my remembrances of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:3-6*

Dear Members and Friends of Messiah Lutheran Church,

Every time I conclude my time at a parish, I begin to look back and assess what God has accomplished, often times, despite me. I say in spite of me, because after I was installed in my first parish, a well-known pastor came up to me and said: "Rich, just make sure you stay out of God's way!" Good words of advice, but often it is difficult to stay out of God's way because we always want to help God along don't we.

This is my final newsletter letter to you, the members of Messiah, and looking back it has been with God's blessings a partnership that Judy and I will always hold deep within our hearts. You have loved, supported, encouraged, and joined with us in a desire to build a bigger heaven. And even if we had disagreements we still continued with the mission, and made the changes needed to transform Messiah from being satisfied with the way everything is, to becoming a dynamic force of conservative values and ideas which will continue with God's blessings to help proclaim the Gospel of Hope to a spiritually hurting world.

I encourage you to remain strong always standing on God's eternal and changeless Word. Continue to be bold with your ministry ideas, always ready to share the Good News with the Valdosta community, remembering that you are here to build a bigger heaven one soul at a time.

There will always distraction and distractors who because of a lack of faith or inspired by Satan will seek to influence the decision-making progress. So, remember that God desires all things to be done in "decency and order" and promises to provide for every need. Remember to support your Pastor with prayer, words of encouragement and give of your time and talents also. Support your lay leaders as well with prayer and words of encouragement.

There is no way I can remember all the kind deeds, gifts and words of encouragement shared with me during the past two and one-half years. So let me in a general way say, "Thank you!" for everything you have done to make my ministry to the members of Messiah a joyful, rewarding experience. It has truly been a "partnership" for which Judy, and I give all praise and glory to God alone who through the power of the Holy Spirit enabled us to minister to the needs of Messiah! May God bless and keep!

***Your Servant in Christ,  
Pastor Lohmeyer***



## **A SEASON OF FAREWELL AND NEW BEGINNINGS**

***Connie - President***

Greetings Messiah Family!

We are in a season of change and transition. Two words most of us dislike, but an inevitable part of life. With change, there's resistance, emotionality (anger, anxiety, sadness, grief), and ultimately acceptance.

Recently, we "lost" the Mitchell family. A family whose contributions and devotion to Messiah Lutheran are difficult to match. However, we didn't really lose them; they simply moved to Montana. A change, I'm sure, wrought with all of the mentioned emotions and then some! We are happy for them, we pray for God's abundant blessings in their lives, and days filled with joy, but it's bittersweet.

Messiah Lutheran is readying for yet another change, as we prepare to Ordain and Install a new pastor. We are excited, eager, anxious, and yes, sad. Because welcoming Stephen Wareham means saying goodbye to Pastor Rich and Judy Lohmeyer.

They've been here much longer than the congregation anticipated. They had been planning retirement, not more work. But God had another plan. Pastor initially intended to be at Messiah for a few months. That turned into two and a half years!

However, Pastor and Judy made good use of their time, making multiple changes that have invigorated and revitalized Messiah Lutheran. With Pastor Rich as our Shepherd, we will install 16 new church members, and we've created consistent outreach and evangelism with MAFB.

We've expanded the visibility of our parish in the community, via various platforms (in person, consistent updates in the electronic sign, Facebook, Website maintenance, live streaming of sermons), growing Messiah Lutheran's ability to share the Gospel with Valdosta and beyond. God has a plan for our church.

Pastor Rich installed a Board of Elders, the first in the lifetime of Messiah Lutheran! He focused on children's education, ensuring they have a dedicated space for learning. Pastor developed the popular Men's Potluck Bible Study, he and Judy together established ongoing,

fellowship opportunities, which is a model for us to joyfully continue.

Judy created our newsletter, Messiah Messenger, which provides parishioners with yet another way to be informed about church events and Council actions. Their accomplishments are just too many to list. We have so much to be grateful for!

It is right and fitting to celebrate how far Messiah Lutheran has come, and also those who lead us here. **Pastor Rich and Judy, we cannot say it more definitively, thank you, thank you, thank you.**

***In Christ,  
Connie DiMarco***



## **TENDING THE FLOCK AND THE GROUNDS**

***Cindy – Property Chair***

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and in all the flock, over thee which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

An update was received on the directional signs, and installation is now scheduled for July 3<sup>rd</sup>.

An electrician is scheduled to repair/replace the breaker that supplies power to the dishwasher on July 7. Thanks to Larry for finding the faulty breaker. His effort saved us a lot of money.

We appreciate everybody's assistance in keeping the church property tidy. A bag of trash was left on the ground beside the containers, and an animal got into the bag. This created a huge mess that our Treasurer cleaned up. This bag may have been left by some stranger not associated with the church, but if you are removing trash from the building, please place it in one of the trash containers by the shed. If the containers are full, the bag must be taken back inside the building. As always, thank you for your help in taking care of our church home.

***As always, thanks for your support in taking care of the church property. We are blessed!***

## **NOTES FROM THE TREASURER**

***Ken – Treasurer***

We are rapidly approaching budget time! Department chairs, I encourage you to review your spending for the past year so that you can make an educated guess as to what you will need to spend in fiscal year 2025-26! No budget is ever perfect. But with the help of a written plan, we can determine our needs for the twelve months ahead. I can provide you with a written report of your year-to-date expenses should you need one.

As you are aware, we will have expenses for the upcoming installation and ordination of our incoming Pastor. I am asking that you consider a donation to help defray these unbudgeted costs. Many out-of-town visitors and officials from the district as well as nearby Pastors, will be here for this event. We will put our best foot forward with your help!

Power rates are now in effect. If you are using the church facilities, please make sure when you depart that you set the thermostats to “unoccupied” so we don’t cool an empty building.

As a reminder, I am a Georgia Notary Public. I do not charge for this service.

For an easy giving method, I encourage you to take a look at the Thrivent Messiah Lutheran page at:

<https://service.thrivent.com/apps/ThriventChoiceMemberWeb/public/orgDetails/100244343209>.

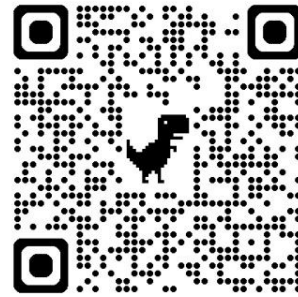
**An even quicker alternative is Zelle from your bank to [MessiahVLDtreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:MessiahVLDtreasurer@gmail.com).**

Every Saturday morning, I send out a snapshot financial report to anyone who has an interest in seeing it. If you would like to receive it, just drop me an email at [MessiahVLDtreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:MessiahVLDtreasurer@gmail.com).

FYI, I am also a Georgia Notary Public.

I do not charge for this service.

***Thanks for your continued support!***



Give Online to Messiah!  
Scan code with your  
phone & follow  
directions.

**Scan the code and take a peek,  
Support the mission that we seek.  
Every dollar, every share,  
Shows our neighbors that we care.**

Send Money with Zelle®

Scan in your banking app to pay



MessiahLutheranChub

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**zelle**



**HONORING THE PAST,**  
**WELCOMING THE FUTURE**

***Carol – Worship Chair***

**Hello Messiah family,**

What a joyful season this is for our congregation! As we prepare to welcome and celebrate the installation of Candidate Stephan Wareham, our hearts are full of gratitude and hope. We are truly blessed and excited for the future of Messiah Lutheran Church.

I would also like to take a heartfelt moment to thank Pastor Lohmeyer and Judy. For years, they lovingly postponed their own adventures to remain steadfast in the ministry of His Word among us. Through Pastor Lohmeyer's faithful leadership, we have deepened our devotion to Christ and grown together as a family of faith. His guidance has given us a clear path forward, and the footprint he leaves behind is woven into the very foundation of our little church.

Pastor and Judy, I am excited for this next chapter in your lives. Thank you for your friendship, encouragement, and the kindness you have shown all of us. You have truly been a blessing.

Before we gather in worship, Pastor has encouraged us to use those quiet moments before the service to center our hearts—through reflection, meditation, and prayer. The following prayer is a beautiful way to prepare our minds and spirits to receive God's Word. Dear God, you speak through your dear son. Blessed are those who hear your word. How easy it would be were we to increasingly praise and thank You with joyful hearts that You have no benevolence and fatherly revealed Yourself to us, lowly creatures, speaking with us concerning the greatest and best of all matters, namely, eternal life! You never cease to call to us through Your Son, creating in us a desire to hear Your Word, since he said: "Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it" (Luke 11:28) –as if You would make our ears do without it. We who are but earth and ashes, need Your blessed Word. Oh, how unspeakably great and wonderful Your benevolence and patience. On the other hand, affliction and woe

be upon the thanklessness and stubborn blindness of those who not only refuse to hear Your Word alone but also treat it with deliberate mockery, persecution, and spite, Amen. ~ *Lutheran Prayer Book (68)*

**You are truly a blessing to our congregation!**

**~ Worship Committee**



**CHURCH COUNCIL CORNER**

***Submitted by Don***

Church Council Update – JUNE 2025

The Messiah Lutheran Church Council met on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Messiah's Church Council met on June 9 to review ongoing matters and prepare for upcoming events.

**Old Business:**

- The May minutes were approved.
- Council continued discussion regarding appropriate signage for building security.

**Chair Reports:**

- Pastor Lohmeyer shared reflections from the recent FL/GA District Convention and gave an update on Candidate Wareham's visit.
- The Treasurer reported that giving remains behind this year's projected goals.

**New Business:**

- Planning is underway for the Ordination and Installation of Pastor Stephen Wareham, including a fellowship gathering following the service.
- The annual school supply drive was discussed.
- Council awaits the finalized report from the ongoing financial review.
- The next council meeting is scheduled for July 14.

The meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer.

## **MAKE JOYFUL NOISE WITH US!**

***Kathy***

This month's **Joyful Noise Luncheon** is set for **Tuesday, July 15<sup>th</sup> at 11:45 AM**, and we're gathering at **Southern Shores** (958 N. St. Augustine Rd) for some delicious BBQ and uplifting conversation.

It's a great chance to laugh, catch up, and enjoy some time together. **Please let Kathy know if you'll be there.** Can't wait to see you!

## **FROM YOUR PANTRY TO THEIRS:**

### **LET'S FEED THE NEED**

***Kathy – Evangelism***

As summer continues, so does the mission of the Messiah food pantry, Loaves and Fishes!

We are busier than ever...especially the first 45 minutes to an hour. We are still serving more than 50 families every two weeks with family sizes ranging up to 12 or more members. Costs, as we are all aware, keep rising, and we are able to ease some of those costs by providing much-needed groceries.

Just this month, we purchased 2,966 pounds of food! We have logged 57.5 hours through the 24th of June, and not including the hours that will be spent the 2nd Wednesday of June. Without our volunteers, we would not be able to carry this mission forward...many thanks my co-chairs, Kay and Cathy, and our various volunteers: Donna and Kari, Laura and John-Michael, MaryBeth, Trina, Sandy, and Raquel.

**With gratitude,  
The Loaves and Fishes Team**

## **LWML SUMMER HIATUS**

***Kay – LWML***

LWML is taking the summer off! With summer vacations, we will not meet in June or July. For us to have the Christmas Bazaar on the first Saturday in November, we need all our crafters to get busy crafting now so that we are ready for the bazaar.

If any of you would like to share a craft with others in the group, let us know. We will set a time to work on your idea with the group.

## **WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!**

We are overjoyed to welcome the newest members of our Messiah Lutheran Church family!

Please join us in celebrating the addition of:

- Eli
- Rick & Rosemarie
- Mike & Rebekah
- Sydney
- Jen & Jess
- Judith & Wolf

We give thanks to God for each of you and the unique gifts you bring to our congregation. May this be the beginning of many meaningful connections, shared worship, and growth together in faith. Welcome home!



Rae Hubbard	2
Janice Witmer	8
Paul Hill	23
Robin Walsh	26
David Foutz	28
Larry Lorden	28

## **FAITHFULNESS:** **THE STEWARDSHIP STANDARD**

*"Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2)*

What is the standard to which a steward is held?

Ask the average person, and they might talk about percentages, tithes, and commitments. Too often, the default mode of measuring stewards is by how much and how frequently they give. Measuring activity without any connection to baptismal identity is a recipe for disaster. It can either breed a sense of superiority and self-righteousness or create a culture of scarcity and despair. Neither outcome is godly or helpful.

This is not to say that stewardship should be regarded as "no big deal." St. Paul, within his discussion of the ministry to which he has been called, sets the standard of accountability for the steward: faithfulness. This removes any sense of superiority or self-righteousness and dispels scarcity and despair. When a steward manages what the Lord has entrusted to them — resources and all aspects of life — for God's purposes, the focus is not on how much or how frequently they give. The commended stewards were recognized for their faithfulness in their vocation, not the amounts they managed. Conversely, the condemned stewards were not castigated for their lack of performance but for their lack of faithfulness.

What does this mean for the steward in the pew? The Lord has entrusted you with various things. Luther captures them in his explanation of the First Article of the Apostles' Creed and the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer. The familiar couplets of food and drink, house and home, spouse and children, land, animals, and all possessions are the Lord's, and He has entrusted them to you for His purpose.

This trust brings an active realization of thanksgiving. This active thanksgiving is our stewardship. It can be distilled into two questions that the steward regularly needs to answer:

**1. How has God blessed me?**

**2. How is He calling me to respond?**

The first question is quite simple to answer: if the Lord has entrusted something to you, it is a blessing. This blessing is for God's glory and the benefit of your neighbor. The second question is

more challenging to measure; it is not about percentages and charts. Instead, it is about a life of thanksgiving that flows from the mercies of God revealed in Jesus Christ. This thanksgiving starts at and flows from the cross and the empty tomb. Our stewardship of the Gospel drives our stewardship of everything else.

The standard, then, is faithfulness.

Faithfulness flows from eyes focused on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. It does not come from our efforts but through the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives, through Word and Sacrament. It begins at the altar in the Divine Service but extends into the world — from hearth and home to workplace and classroom, from commerce to leisure. The mercy of God, freely given in Jesus, leads us to demonstrate a faithfulness that reveals to others the same mercy we have received in Jesus.

This faithfulness cannot be measured empirically. It is simply allowing the Holy Spirit to work in and through us for the glory of God and the benefit of our neighbor. Weekly. Daily. Faithfully.



# July 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 10:00 "Tuesdays with the Pastor" Bible Study  6:00 Men's Potluck Bible Study	2	3 REO 000  NO QUILTING GROUP	4 REO 000	5 REO 000
6 REO 000 9:00 Bible Study  9:30 Sun. School  10:30 Worship	7 REO 000	8 REO 000  10:00 "Tuesdays with the Pastor" Bible Study  6:00 Men's Potluck Bible Study	9 REO 000  11-3 Food Pantry  5:00 "Farewell to the Lohmeyers" Dinner	10 REO 000  9:00 LWML Quilter's Group	11 REO 000	12 REO 000
13 9:00 Bible Study  9:30 Sun. School  10:30 Worship  3:00 Ordain & Install Stephen Wareham	14  6:00 Church Council Meeting	15 10:00 "Tuesdays with the Pastor" Bible Study  11:45 Joyful Noise Lunch (Southern Shores)  5:30 Elder's Meeting  6:00 Men's Potluck Bible Study	16	17 9:00 LWML Quilter's Group  5:30 Long- Range Planning Comm. Meeting	18	19
20 9:00 Bible Study  9:30 Sun. School  10:30 Worship	21	22 10:00 "Tuesdays with the Pastor" Bible Study  6:00 Men's Potluck Bible Study	23 11-3 Food Pantry	24 9:00 LWML Quilter's Group	25	26
27 9:00 Bible Study  9:30 Sun. School  10:30 Worship	28	29 10:00 "Tuesdays with the Pastor" Bible Study  6:00 Men's Potluck Bible Study	30	31 9:00 LWML Quilter's Group		