



Messiah Messenger



Issue #40

August 2026

PASTOR'S CORNER

Guidance, Encouragement, & Reflection

BRINGING WHAT WE HAVE:

GOD DOES THE REST

Hello Messiah Family!

The end of summer is finally getting close! School is starting soon, and with it, all the busyness that school entails; more importantly, cooler, less humid weather is slowly on its way as well!! But for me, what I'm most excited about is football, especially college football.

I LOVE college football! In my opinion, it's better than the NFL. You never know what's going to happen any season, like the Hoosiers coming out of nowhere to win the Championship last year; and the colleges and their fans just seem to have more fun, be more passionate about their teams. And even though I'm just a fan, I always like to think that my support of my favorite team (Go Dawgs!) helps them do at least a little bit better, because it takes a lot of people, and a very supportive fan base, to make a truly great football team.

You may have heard me after church these past few Sundays talking about volunteers, and how we can use always more hands here at Messiah. And for me, when I think about volunteers, what always comes to mind is a quote I heard about church and football: "Church is a lot like a football game: you've got 10-20 people out on the field playing the game, and everybody else in the stands cheering them on!" Now that's not to say that if you're a fan instead of a player that you're not doing anything; every team needs great fans! It's impossible without them. But, unlike in football, our team here at Messiah is always accepting new players, and we'd love to have you join us!

This Sunday we'll be reading the story of Jesus feeding the 5000, one of his more famous miracles, and for good reason. With nothing more

than five loaves of bread and two fish, Jesus miraculously fed a massive crowd! But it wouldn't have been possible without the disciples and the boy they found who offered up the bread and the fish.

When the disciples told Jesus that the crowd was too big and needed to be sent away to feed themselves, "Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." (Matthew 14:16) And so the disciples went and found the boy with his two fish and five loaves, and even though his offering was meagre, much too small to feed so many, Jesus was able to make it enough; more than enough, actually! The disciples got to witness Jesus turn a meagre offering into enough food to feed thousands of people, with twelve baskets of food, more than started with, left over! And the disciples learned that day to not underestimate God, who can and does do great things very little.

The same is true of each of us and the congregation of Messiah. No matter what gift we bring, whether big or small, of our time or our skills or our money, when we offer those things to God, He does great and amazing things with them!! It's why I'm so excited to be a part the ministry that is Messiah Lutheran Church, and why I look forward to seeing what God does with all the great gifts He has shared with us as carry out His ministry!

So if you've ever even thought about being one of the players on our volunteer team, we'd love for you to join us! And for those of you who are fans, thank you!! Nothing we do could happen without your support, your encouragement, and your cheers. Messiah is truly a special place, and I can't tell you how excited I am to see in what ways God grows our ministry and His church here in Valdosta.

**God's Blessings on the rest of your summer
and the school year,
Pastor Stephen Wareham**

NOTES FROM THE TREASURER

Your Monthly Map to Messiah's Treasure

Ken Eldridge – Treasurer

Lynn and I are headed north for a couple of weeks to babysit our eleven-year-old granddaughter while Sonia has surgery on her knee at Johns-Hopkins.

Please keep Sonia and Geoff in your prayers as they travel to Baltimore for her surgery.

The proposed BUDGET for fiscal year 2026-2027 is available for review. Pick up your copy in the narthex. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have. We vote on it August 30th at the congregational meeting.

TREASURER NEEDED!

I've not heard from anyone who wishes to succeed me as treasurer as I depart December 31st!

I will gladly help train someone to replace me. But after the 1st of January I will no longer be signing checks or paying bills as my 2nd term will have expired.

I have most things automated now so the bulk of the job is correctly categorizing receipts and expenses, and making sure bills are accrued and paid when due.

Payroll taxes are handled by our CPA and we simply write the checks to forward the taxes owed to the U.S. Treasury and State of Georgia.

Time is short. Please prayerfully consider running for this important office. I will be happy to answer any questions anyone may have about the job!



JOYFUL BITES & HARMONY

Food, Fun, & Fellowship EVERY month!

Joyful Noise will be gathering for food, fun, and fellowship! If you'd like to join, please notify Kathy Andrew by February 11th, so that enough seats can be reserved.

 **Wednesday, August 18th**  **11:45 AM**

 **El Cazador (1600 N. Ashley St.)**

 **We HOPE to see you there!** 

COUNCIL COMPASS

Guiding the Direction of Messiah

Connie DiMarco – Council President

HONORING OUR PAST, AND BUILDING OUR FUTURE

Summer is flying by and school starts in just days. Where does time go? I find myself asking that a lot. There are many new attendees on Sundays, and several have inquired about membership. We have more children in church; what a blessing! The future of our parish will be entrusted to such as these.

I think about the stages Messiah Lutheran has journeyed through and remember what was. We think about those who've passed, and we remember them with love, and, at times, sadness. There are members who've left due to work or military reassignment, and we miss them. We share funny stories; we remember their trials, and ours.

Messiah Lutheran has overcome many challenges and celebrated numerous successes. I believe she is stronger now for those challenges, leading us to a more cohesive, more faith-filled church. We extensively searched for, and prayed about, finding a permanent pastor. God heard our pleas and answered by bringing us Pastor Wareham. As change continues within Messiah Lutheran, we can honor our past and look forward to more growth.

This year is the 70th anniversary of Messiah Lutheran Church. Given the attacks from our society on the Christian church, this is an accomplishment! Recognizing this achievement is important. We have recovered photos and scrapbooks showcasing the decades of our church. Yet, individual stories about the early days of Messiah Lutheran are missing and needed.

I'm seeking volunteers to plan and coordinate recognition of our anniversary. If interested, please contact me, Marcia, or Mary Beth. Long-time church members are most appreciated!

**IHN,
Connie DiMarco**





SERVING THE LORD TOGETHER:

AN INVITATION TO LEAD

Carol Walters – Worship Chair

“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow.” Ecclesiastes 4:9–10

For two terms, I have had the great privilege of serving as your Worship Chair. It has been a season of deep joy working alongside Pastor, Kay, and Sandy as we planned worship, thoughtfully aligning music with Scripture for our services. It has also been a privilege to prepare our sanctuary for the changing seasons, ensure the altar is cared for each Sunday, and work alongside our dedicated Altar Care Lead and the many helping hands at Messiah. Serving in this ministry has been one of the most fulfilling experiences of my life.

My second term as Worship Chair concludes at the end of this year. According to the church constitution, a council member may serve no more than two consecutive terms in the same role. This necessary boundary has arrived, which means I cannot continue as Worship Chair for a third term. Our selection committee will begin seeking Messiah’s next Worship Chair this December.

I am sharing this with you because the heart of our worship cannot stop beating, and the role cannot remain empty. The person God is preparing may not realize it yet.

Keeping Worship Strong

We are blessed with volunteers who faithfully serve throughout the year, but every ministry also needs someone to coordinate the work behind the scenes. Without a Worship Chair, the planning, scheduling, communication, seasonal preparation, and countless details that make worship

meaningful do not disappear. They simply shift onto the shoulders of our Pastor, our Music Director, and our Audio Technician, whose primary calling is to lead us in worship, not carry the administrative responsibilities of this ministry.

Taking on this role isn’t about working in isolation. It is about stepping into the center of our community’s faith life to protect and support the leaders who feed us spiritually every single week.

An Open Seat Beside Me

There is an incredible, quiet joy in serving the Lord with willing hands. Every act of service builds up the body of Christ. As we look toward the future, I ask you to prayerfully consider if the Lord is opening a door for you to serve with gladness and devotion.

If you look at this role and feel hesitant, please know you will not step into this ministry alone.

If the Lord places this ministry in your heart, I will gladly share everything I have learned over the past four years. My deepest desire is to sit down with you, lay out the pages of this ministry, and welcome you into the work.

Just as Scripture reminds us that “two are better than one,” let us pray together over the coming months that God will raise up the next person to care for the heart of our worship. If you are curious or have questions, please reach out. I am ready to pull up a chair for you.

“May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.” Ruth 2:12

In His Service,
Messiah Worship Committee



☀ STEWARDSHIP SPOTLIGHT ☀

Sharing, Serving, and Supporting Messiah
Marcia Lorden – Stewardship Chair

DEFINE YOUR LIFE BY HOW YOU GIVE

Winston Churchill reportedly said that “we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” According to Churchill, our lives are defined not by what we have gotten, but by what we give away.

Our Lord’s life is defined in this way. He gave completely of Himself for us. He became man for us. He taught the truth of God’s Word. He healed those with many and various diseases. He died the death that we deserved for our sins. He gave of Himself in order to save us from sin, death and hell. And so it is that by giving completely of Himself, He got for Himself us, making us citizens of His eternal kingdom by grace.

As it was for Jesus, so it also is for us. We get more from giving than we do from simply getting. For, giving softens our hearts and frees us from the grip which the worries of this world and making a living have on us. When we are singularly focused on making a living, we are singularly focused on what we get. That mindset begins to bleed into all areas of our lives — our relationships with friends and family, with neighbors and coworkers and with the Lord. It shifts our focus from asking the question, “How can I be a friend, family member, neighbor and servant to others?” to asking the question, “What have they done for me lately?” We become more selfish instead of selfless.

But when we give, we do not have less, nor do we become less; rather, we have more and become more. When we give, we join in the bond of friendship and family, the bond of service to those around us out of love for them. And love is the fulfillment of the Law. It is the nature of God Himself, for God is Love. Thus, we are participating in the Divine Nature.

As Jesus said,
“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
Acts 20:35

✦ MITE BOX MATTERS ✦

What’s in YOUR Mite Box? – Faith in Action
Kay Vincent – LWML Chair

The next LWML meeting will be held on **Tuesday, August 4th, at 3:00 p.m.** in the Fellowship Hall. All women of Messiah are warmly invited to join us for fellowship, Bible study, and light refreshments.

During the meeting, we will discuss preparations for our **Christmas Bazaar & Bake Sale**, scheduled for **Saturday, November 7**. We welcome Messiah members to donate their handcrafted items and homemade baked goods for the sale. We look forward to seeing you there!



🐑 THE SHEPHERD’S WATCH POST 🌿

Watching Over Our Flock with Prayer
Charlie Francis – Head Elder

If you know someone in our Messiah family who is ill, homebound, or living in a care facility, please reach out to Pastor or one of our elders.

By letting us know, we can extend timely prayer, encouragement, and support to those in need.

It truly takes our entire church family to help watch over our flock and to share Christ’s care!

A warm and sincere thank you from Pastor Wareham and Your Elders!



August 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:00 Adult Bible Study 10:30 Worship	3	4 3:00 LWML Meeting 6: Ladies & Gents Separate Potluck Bible Study	5	6 9:00 Quilter's Group	7	8
9 9:00 Adult Bible Study 10:30 Worship	10 6:00 Church Council Meeting	11 6: Ladies & Gents Separate Potluck Bible Study	12 11 - 2: Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry	13 9:00 Quilter's Group	14	15
16 9:00 Adult Bible Study 10:30 Worship	17	18 11:45 Joyful Noise Lunch - El Cazador (1600 N. Ashley) 6: Ladies & Gents Separate Potluck Bible Study	19	20 9:00 Quilter's Group 5:30: Long-Range Planning Committee Meeting	21	22
23 9:00 Adult Bible Study 10:30 Worship	24	25 6: Ladies & Gents Separate Potluck Bible Study	26 11 - 2: Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry	27 9:00 Quilter's Group	28	29
30 9:00 Adult Bible Study 10:30 Worship	31					