Messiah Messenger

Issue #32

PRAISE THE LORD!

God's blessings on all of you as we enter into a rather busy time of the year: Thanksgiving and Christmas! There's always a ton to do for the holidays, and this year is no different for me, but it really is my favorite time of year. I love everything about it, from eating a turkey with family and friends at Thanksgiving to hanging Christmas lights and decorating the tree! It's also a great time to celebrate all the gifts that God has given us, like the family and friends we celebrate with, the church community we worship with, and, of course, the greatest gift of all, Jesus Christ! As the words of Psalm 150 say:

Praise the Lord!

Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens.

- 2 Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness.
- 3 Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre,
- 4 Praise him with timbrel and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe,
- 5 Praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals.
- 6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!

Now, I'd like to introduce the theme for this year's Advent Series: "Advent Songs of Salvation." Our first Midweek Advent service theme will focus on the song of Mary, the Magnificat. This is the song that Mary, mother of Jesus, sings when she visits Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, in praise to the Lord for lifting them up and making them part of the fulfillment of His promise through their children. Our Gospel reading, which contains the Magnificat, will be Luke 1:46-55.

Our second Midweek Advent service theme will focus on the song of Zechariah, the Benedictus. This is the song that Zechariah, father of John the Baptist, sang at John's circumcision. After spending the entire pregnancy mute, Zechariah burst into song, praising the Lord for finally sending His

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Redeemer, Our Savior, Jesus Christ, to His people. Our Gospel reading, which contains the Benedictus, will be Luke 1:57-80.

Our third and final Midweek Advent service theme will focus on the song of Simeon, the Nunc Dimittis. This is the song that Simeon sings at the presentation of Jesus in the Temple. After being promised by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the promised Messiah, Simeon praises the Lord for the coming of Israel, and the world's, salvation in the Christ child, finally able to depart in peace. For those of you who are interested, we will be using the worship setting of Evening Prayer with communion for our Midweek Advent service, a setting that includes the Magnificat, the Benedictus, and the Nunc Dimittis, and which comes from the Lutheran Service Book. I hope that you will be able to join the Messiah family and me in worship, celebration, and anticipation of the coming of our Salvation and Redemption, Jesus Christ!

Finally, information on the services everyone cares about: Christmas Eve and Christmas Day! Our Christmas Eve services will be at Noon and 7:00pm, with the 7:00pm service being our Candlelight Service. Our Christmas Day service will be at 10:30am, the same time as our Sunday services.

Christmas really is my favorite time of the year, and I look forward to spending my first Christmas as a pastor here in warm, sunny Valdosta with all you, this Messiah family that you all have welcomed me into! In the midst of everything going on this time of the year, as trees are going up and lights are being hung and feasts are being cooked, I encourage you, every once in a while, to stop for a moment and think of Psalm 150, and Praise the Lord for all the gifts that He has blessed us with, most of all His gift of Jesus Christ.

Happy Thanksgiving and Christmas for you and your families, Amen and amen, Pastor Stephen Wareham

THE TRUE LIGHT OF CHRISTMAS

Connie DiMarco – President

Greetings Messiah Family:

Welcome to the Season of Christmas! Which means we're shopping, decorating, baking, and more shopping, as we look forward to fellowship, food, and fa la la la la!

Christmas is a lot of work and fun, but it's also the time for reflection on the 'reason for the season'. We would have no Christmas if it were not for the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ.

Our church will be decorated and the tree ready for ornaments. Pastor Stephen will shepherd us through Advent, leading us through the time-honored and blessed story, then into Christmas services, as we prepare for the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Choir Director Craig will lead the Messiah Singers and the congregation in beautiful hymns that capture the significance and beauty of the Advent and Christmas seasons. Yet, we would have nothing to sing about, if Jesus had not been born.

As we go through the festivities and family gatherings, let's remember the reason Christmas is celebrated. It's not the time to extravagantly spend our way into a 'consumer coma'. It's not the time to gather in honor of a light adorned tree or to celebrate a bearded man in a red suit. No, Christmas is when we, Christians, gather to adore a small child humbly born into a dark and cold stable. His name is Jesus. He became then, and is still, the light of the whole world.

Merry Christmas, Messiah Family! In His Name, Connie DiMarco



NOTES FROM THE TREASURER

Ken Eldridge – Treasurer

The magic of Christmas is just around the corner! As we come together to celebrate the birth of our Savior Lord our church home becomes a magical place!

The decorating begins with garland, poinsettias, Christmas trees, and many nativity settings. Advent begins, with two services each Wednesday. A noon service and an evening service with a light meal. Lynn and I hope to see you there!

As the new year approaches, I encourage you to look carefully at your budget, and to consider increasing your gifts to Messiah to continue our mission of building a bigger heaven!

Lynn and I wish you all a very Merry Christmas, and the happiest "Happy New Year" as we welcome the birthday of our Savior and the beginning of our best year ever in 2026!

God is good!

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

If you prefer giving through Zelle, our account is listed under

MessiahVLDtreasurer@gmail.com. You can also give easily through our <u>Thrivent Choice</u> page:

https://service.thrivent.com/apps/ThriventChoice MemberWeb/public/orgDetails/100244343209.

Each Saturday morning, I send out a brief financial snapshot to anyone interested. If you'd like to receive it, just send me a note at that same address.



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



HANDS AT WORK, HEARTS IN SERVICE

Cindy Hodge - Property Chair

Tis the season! As we end the church year and prepare for the celebration of the birth of our Savior, please enjoy, stay safe and take an extra minute to help secure the church. Please double check to make sure the doors are locked when leaving after Advent services and other activities throughout the holiday season.

Thank you to the small group of ladies that have faithfully shown up to tidy the church twice a month. It would be great if more people would participate and share in the effort to save money for the church. A signup sheet is located on a clipboard on the table underneath the mailboxes in the old narthex.

Please consider volunteering your time. As always, thanks for your support in caring for our church home. Merry Christmas!

As always, thanks for your support in caring for our church home. We are blessed!

COUNCIL ELECTIONS: JOIN US AFTER WORSHIP

A Congregation Meeting will be held December 14th, immediately following the Worship service. Four Council positions are up for election.

Currently, we have one nominee for three of the four positions. Nominations from the floor will be accepted for all positions.

Current Nominees:

• President: Connie DeMarco

• Property: James Edmonson

• Financial Secretary: Beth Bush

• Evangelism: No candidate

The Church Council plays a vital role in the ministry and growth of Messiah.

If you have questions about any position, please contact Don Brugel, Wendy Aichele, Abbey Woltors, Beth Bush, or any Council member.

NEW YEAR, SAME JESUS, FRESH JOY!

Carol Walters – Worship Chair

As we step into a new year, I want to give a gigantic thank you to everyone who helped make worship run smoothly this past year. You greeted people at the door with smiles that could rival the coffee hour, and you guided visitors with the kind of precision no navigation system has ever achieved. You supported the congregation during service with grace, and you managed the altar with the steady patience of a seasoned saint. You showed up, you helped out, and you made it all look easy. That is a miracle in itself.

To everyone who worships with us each week and brings your friends, your family, and your joyful Lutheran energy, you fill this place with more light and laughter than you realize. Because of you, this past year has been full of grace, warmth, and the kind of holy humor that keeps our church family strong. Thanks to your enthusiasm, we are already stepping into the new year with excitement and a little extra spring in our step.

If you want to help us with worship activities or simply want to know what you might be getting yourself into, please come see me or send a text. There is always room for another friendly face, and we promise not to assign you a robe or a torch without warning.

In Jesus' Name, Worship Committee



<u>▲ LET THE SEASON SING:</u> A NIGHT OF HOLIDAY MUSIC **▲**

Bob Hubbard would love for our Messiah family to join him at the **Azalea Winds Holiday Concert!**

m Thursday, December 11th

© 7:00 PM

P Boys & Girls Club of Valdosta: 215

W North Street

Come enjoy beautiful seasonal music, support Bob and the Azalea Winds, and soak in the joy of the holidays.

He truly hopes to see you there!



LONG-RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Long-Range Planning Committee will pause meetings during Thanksgiving and Advent seasons.

We are grateful for everyone's dedication and service. Our next meeting will be on **January** 15, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

Wishing you a blessed Thanksgiving and a joyful Christmas!

LWML QUILTERS UPDATE

The LWML Quilters will pause their sessions during the Thanksgiving and Advent seasons. We appreciate all the beautiful work this group contributes to our ministry!

Quilting will resume on January 8, 2026. Wishing everyone a joyful Christmas!



JOIN US FOR A MERRY MEAL!

LWML and Joyful Noise are *joining* forces for a fun and festive holiday lunch!

Monday, December 9th

O 11:45 AM

PRed Lobster: 1179 N Saint Augustine Rd
If you'd like to join, please let Nan Boyd
know by November 26th so they can reserve
enough seats.

Join in for fellowship, food, and a little holiday cheer! Can't wait to see you there!



Connie DiMarco	5
Mark Kinchen	5
Gabby Wescoatt	10
Lynn Eldridge	11
Vann Witherspoon	17
Deb Gordon	16
Cathy Deyo	19
Barbara Fluder	21
Lisa Vincent	21
Barbara Ward	26
Hannelore Mote	27
Talisa Ray-Thornton	27
Deanese Willis	28

December	2025
Wed	Thu

Sun	Mon Tue		Wed	Thu		Fri	Sat
		10:00 Bible Study 6: Mens & Ladies Potluck Bible Studies	11-3 Food Pantry 12:00 Advent Midweek Service 6:00 Advent Dinner 7:00 Advent Midweek Service	3	4	5	•
9:00 Bible Study 9:15 Sun. School 10:30 Worship	6:00 Church Council Meeting	10:00 Bible Study 11:45 Joyful Noise & LWML Luncheon - Red Lobster 6: Mens & Ladies Potluck Bible Studies	12:00 Advent Midweek Service 6:00 Advent Dinner 7:00 Advent Midweek Service	0	11	12	13
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