



## Calendar of Events

### Sunday, March 15

9:30 am Worship/Communion  
10:30 am Special Congregational Meeting  
6:30 pm SW Little League

### Monday, March 16

9:00 am Sew-A-Sack  
6:30 pm Executive Committee  
6:30 pm Missional Outreach

### Tuesday, March 17

9:00 am Sew-A-Sack  
7:00 pm WELCA



### Wednesday, March 18

6:30 pm Lenten Vespers

### Thursday, March 19

1:00 pm Backpacks Packing  
6:00 pm Choir Rehearsal  
7:00 pm Bell Choir  
7:30 pm NA

### Friday, March 20

#### First Day of Spring



### Saturday, March 21

9 am – 12 pm Kids Event



**MESSIAH MESSENGER USPS 342-060**

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## MESSIAH MESSENGER

*Published weekly by*

### MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

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**March 11, 2026**

**VOL. 83 – NO. 10**

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Her name was Mandy, a curious and adventurous little girl back in the day when kids were free range rather than constantly connected to home by a cell phone. It was the 80's after all, simpler times when kids played outside all day and ran the neighborhood with their friends. She landed on my doorstep one day when my little ones were riding their Big Wheels up and down the sidewalk. She was a bit older than my own kids, but they hit it off and she seemed to need the connection. Soon she became a fixture at our house, coming over to help bake cookies, make crafts, or take part in whatever activity we had planned for the day. Before long, she began tagging along with us pretty much everywhere. She had become a part of our family.

One of Mandy's favorite places to go with us was Wednesday evening vespers during Lent. Like clockwork, she would show up at my house at a quarter til seven and we would walk the block and a half to the church. She was always eager to go and never missed a service ... until one week when she didn't show up. We waited as long as we could and then we had to leave for church. The service started promptly at 7:01 p.m. – yes, 7:01, not 7:00. Anyone who has lived in South Side for any length of time will remember the loud “foghorn” alarm that Citizen's Fire Company sounded off with several loud blasts every night at 7:00 sharp, so we always waited until after it stopped to start Vespers.

Soon we were immersed in the chants and the prayers and feeling the warmth of the church community. But it seemed odd without our little friend beside us. Then suddenly the Chapel door burst open and in rushed Mandy, hair tangled and windblown, dirt on her face, torn jeans, scraped knees – and the most incredibly joyful smile radiating from her face. Realizing the service had started, she softly closed the door and quietly slid into the pew next to me, whispering, “I was at the park playing and I heard the fire alarm, so I ran all the way here!”

After the service as we all filed out, Pastor Schroeder opened his arms and Mandy leapt into them with glee. He embraced her in a welcoming hug and simply said, “You're a good girl, Mandy.” He didn't seem to notice the dirty face, the torn clothing, or that she'd been late.

I couldn't help but think that there was a lesson here. Isn't this what Lent is all about, after all? Lent is the call to return to the Lord. God's mercy is greater than our sins, and His grace washes us clean. So come. ***Come as you are*** - late or on time. Come with dirty face, ripped jeans and scraped knees. Come with your heart aches and heart breaks, your broken promises. Come with your fears, doubts, shortcomings and misgivings. Come despite your sins. Come knowing that you will find your heavenly Father ready to greet you with open arms, waiting to enfold you in His loving embrace, and to welcome you home.

May the peace and grace of the Lord be with you always. ~ *Kathy Wither*

*“Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.” ~ Joel 2:13*

**Sunday, March 15, 2026**

**SERVICE ASSISTANTS**

**Ushers:** Fred Harbaugh, Jean Nolan, Diana Rooker, Susan Christ, Greg Eckenrode  
**Lay Asst:** Dave Bausinger; **Comm. Asst.:** Candy Watkins; **Acolyte:** Dylan Sherman  
**Altar Guild:** Rita Strickler, Carol Winter; **Greeters/Presenters:** Rhonda Koch, Ron Yeagle  
**Cantor:** Candy Watkins; **Flower Delivery:** Jody Fuller

**Sunday, March 8:** Attendance: *In Church: 98; Online: 5*; Offering: **\$7,549.38**

**IN BLESSED MEMORY**

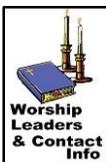
**The Altar Flowers** are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Nelson Silverstrim and Doris Webb Silverstrim, on the 81<sup>st</sup> anniversary of their wedding, March 17, 1945, by their sons and families.

**The Basket of Flowers** is given to the Glory of God and in honor of Carol Hessert and in loving memory of what would have been Sam and Carol's 64<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on March, 16<sup>th</sup>, with love from their daughter Pam.

**The Basket of Flowers** is given to the Glory of God and glorious welcome to our Candidate for Senior Pastor from the Messiah Congregation.

**BIBLE READINGS**

**Sunday, March 15:** *1 Samuel 16:1-13; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41*  
**Monday, March 16:** *Psalm 146; Isaiah 59:9-19; Acts 9:1-20*  
**Tuesday, March 17:** *Psalm 146; Isaiah 42:14-21; Colossians 1:9-14*  
**Wednesday, March 18:** *Psalm 146; Isaiah 60:17-22; Matthew 9:27-34*  
**Thursday, March 19:** *Psalm 130; Ezekiel 1:1-3; 2:8-3:3; Revelation 10:1-11*  
**Friday, March 20:** *Psalm 130; Ezekiel 33:10-16; Revelation 11:15-19*  
**Saturday, March 21:** *Psalm 130; Ezekiel 36:8-15; Luke 24:44-53*

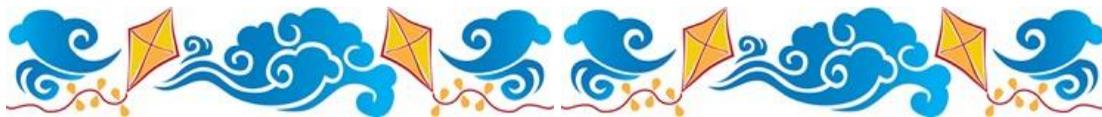


**Presiding over our worship this Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>** will be the candidate for our Senior Pastor.

**Pastoral Care Number:** Please call (570) 326-9171. (Available 24 hours a day) During work hours office staff will assist you. After hours, please press "3" for a Pastoral Emergency to be connected directly to the Pastor.

*Articles for the Messenger and Bulletin are due in the office by Monday at noon.*

**Copies of *Behold Your King!* a Lenten Devotional Booklet and Lenten Self-Denial Calendars & Banks** that benefit Habitat for Humanity are also in the Narthex; plus, current copies of the devotional booklets *The Upper Room* and *Christ in Our Home* are available in the Narthex and the church office.



## The Library Corner – Highlighted Books



Children - **The Holy Moly Easter Story** - Full of stirring storytelling and imaginative illustrations, this book brings Holy Week to awe-inspiring life. From Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey to the women discovering the empty tomb, kids will be captivated with this story of hope and new life. Book in the Easter Holiday Section of our library. We also have a DVD with the same name

in the Easter section.

Adult - **A Violent Grace by Michael Card** - To believers today, the cross has lost much of its appeal as a symbol of Christianity. Yet what Christ did at the cross remains central to our faith. Michael Card calls upon us to focus our attention once again on the cross. Explore with this impassioned troubadour the Old Testament prophecies and Gospel accounts of Jesus' self-sacrifice. Follow Jesus to the cross and realize anew that God's free gift of grace to you was purchased at the cost of inconceivable violence to His Son. The book can be found in the Easter Section of the library.

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**Saints in Song will lift our voices to sing praise to God** during worship on Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>. If you like to sing, you are invited to join with the choir that day for an anthem that is easy to learn and is based on "Amazing Grace". Rehearsal will be before worship on March 15 at 8:45. Please join us.

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**Messiah Lutheran Preschool is now accepting registrations for the 2026-2027 school year.** The program is Monday – Friday. We have a morning class 8:30 am – 11:30 am for 3 and 4 year olds (the child needs to be 3-years old by Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>) and the afternoon class is 11:30 am -2:30 pm this is the Pre-K class for 4 and 5 year olds who expect to begin kindergarten in Fall 2026. **For more information**, please call 570-326-9171 (option 2) to speak with or leave a message for the volunteer preschool coordinator, Linda Miller. **Registration forms are also available in the church office.** *Since space is limited early registration is encouraged. Thank you.*

preschool registration



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**Calling all pie makers!!** If you like to bake, especially pies, please share your favorite pie with us at our **pie social**. The fellowship committee will be hosting a pie social on **March 29<sup>th</sup>**, immediately following worship and would love to see how many pies we can get. If you would be willing to make a pie for our social, please sign-up on the sheet in the Narthex. The fellowship committee will provide the beverages and cool whip; we just need the pies.



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**PLEASE NOTE: THE EASTER FLOWERS ARE \$8.00**  
**NOW IS THE TIME to put in your reservation for memorial Easter Flowers.** Several varieties of flowers are available. More information can be found on the order form. The flowers may be picked up immediately after Worship on Easter Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. **PLEASE RETURN THE ORDER FORM BY SUNDAY, MARCH 29<sup>th</sup>.** Call the church office 570-326-9171 if you have any questions.



**Mark your calendars!**



**Meet and Greet – Open House**  
**Saturday, March 14, 2026**  
**1:00 pm - 3:00 pm**

Join us in Shaheen Hall for a **Meet and Greet**. This will give you an opportunity to meet with the candidate for Senior Pastor. Light refreshments will be served.

**Sunday Worship**  
**Sunday, March 15, 2026 – 9:30 am**



**Sunday, March 15, 2026**, all members are invited to attend Worship and a special congregational meeting. The candidate for senior pastor will lead the worship service.

**Your vote matters!** Immediately, following the service, we encourage all members to remain for a special congregational meeting to vote on extending an official call to this candidate. We look forward to seeing you on **Sunday, March 15, 2026**.



**WELCA in March –STATIONS** are places where people wait while they are going from one place or another. Stations are also places where people take time to think about Jesus and His journey to the cross. We will take that journey and look at our own lives and pray to be more like him. Please come along with us on March 17 at 7:00 pm.

**Do you like toy trains?** There is a basement full of toy trains at the THOMAS T. TABER MUSEUM... and your opportunity to see them on SUNDAY, APRIL 26 (12:15-2:15 p.m.). The cost is just \$6.50 per person (adult and children). Tickets will be available in the narthex on April 12 and 19. WELCA members are providing a sandwich/salad lunch immediately after the Service for all “Museum Tourists”. Then we’ll car-pool to the Museum on W. Fourth Street. **Save the date! “Trivia Night”**  
**Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm**



**If you would like to help get the Palms** ready for Palm Sunday Worship, please join us Saturday morning, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am

**Kid’s Lenten Event**

**Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup> 9 A.M. - 12 Noon**

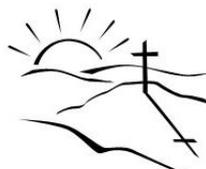
Age 4 through Grade 6

Teen Helpers Appreciated

*Join us on a Lenten journey to Easter:*



- ☞ Story Time
- ☞ Pretzel Baking
- ☞ Service Project
- ☞ Crafts and Games

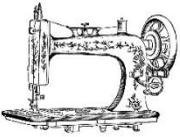


Contact the church office at 570-326-9171 with any questions or to register.



**The Kids Lent Event will be held Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>** from 9 - noon. Registration forms can be found online or in the alleyway entrance. We are still in need of volunteers so if you are able and willing to help please contact me as soon as you can. Thank you in advance for your continued support of these wonderful outreach programs for the children communities. *Kathryn Pratt*





**Lutheran World Relief School Kits 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual “Sew-A-Sack”  
Monday and Tuesday, March 16-17, 2025 ~ 9:00 a.m.-???**

Our sew-a-thons are becoming a beloved tradition, a time to join in mission while forging friendships. Come on out and enjoy a morning of fellowship as we work together to sew the backpacks needed for the school kits.

**Can’t sew, or don’t have a machine? *No problem!*** We can put you to work marking fabric, cutting, pinning, pressing casings (it’s easy and we’ll show you how), or helping in other ways. At noon, we will share conversation over a light lunch.

**Didn’t have time to sign up last Sunday?** No problem ... come anyway!

**Can’t stay the whole time?** Come when you can, leave when you must. There is plenty to do! *Join us for a fun time ... we guarantee “we will keep you in stitches!”*

**Please note:** *Those who may not be able to attend the sew-a-thon but would still like to make complete backpacks at home are more than welcome to do so! (See below.)*

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**For our Home Sew-ers:**

**Volunteers are needed to do a little sewing on their own to prep the fabric pieces** before they are fashioned into backpacks. The task consists of merely turning under the edges of the fabric and doing a zig-zag stitch all the way around – that’s all! This simple preparation will make it easier for us to make the finished backpacks.

**Those who are unable to attend the Sew-A-Sack but would still like to make backpacks at home** may pick up the pre-surged fabric pieces and instructions in the narthex on Sunday mornings or from the church office during the week.

**For all sew-ers:** *Remember to add your name to the sign-out sheet as well as the number of pieces you take home (and also be sure to indicate on the sheet that you have returned them when you bring them back!) so that we can keep track of the number of backpacks and where they are.*

**Questions?? Call Sally Congdon at 570-547-6193 or Kathy Wither at 570-651-2802.**

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**✪ Scholarship Available to the Pennsylvania State University**

The Jane Elizabeth Newlin and Everett Mason Batschelet Memorial Scholarship is offered annually to an incoming first year student who will be enrolled at any campus of the Pennsylvania State University *including the Pennsylvania College of Technology*. To qualify for the Newlin-Batschelet scholarship, an applicant must be a public high school graduate or prospective graduate. The recipient will be nominated by a committee appointed by our Congregation Council. Nominees will be submitted to the Pennsylvania State University in order to verify the nominee’s financial eligibility as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Approved candidates will be informed by Penn State and will receive an annual scholarship of \$5,000.00 for a maximum of four years, as long as they are enrolled as a full-time student on a Penn State campus, remain eligible, and funds are available.

Applications for this scholarship may be obtained by calling the church office. **All applications are due in the church office by Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>.** **Because references, SAT scores, and transcripts must also be filed, applicants should obtain an application as soon as possible.**

