



Calendar of Events

Sunday, September 20

8:15 am Sunday School
9:30 am Worship/Communion
10:45 am Quilt of Valor

Monday, September 21

8:30 am – 2:30 pm Preschool
12:00 pm Noon Day Prayers
6:30 pm Executive Committee

Tuesday, September 22

First day of Autumn

8:30 am – 2:30 pm Preschool
12:00 pm Noon Day Prayers
2:30 pm Choir Rehearsal
7:00 pm Property Committee

Wednesday, September 23

8:30 am – 2:30 pm Preschool
12:00 pm Noon Day Prayers
6:30 pm Bible Study

Thursday, September 24

8:30 am – 2:30 pm Preschool
12:00 pm Noon Day Prayers
1:00 pm SW Backpack Packing
7:30 pm NA

Friday, September 25

8:30 am – 2:30 pm Preschool
6:00 pm Weaver/Sampsell
Wedding Rehearsal

Saturday, September 26

12:00 pm Noon Day Prayers
12:30 pm Weaver/Sampsell
Wedding



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“God wants to attract us, so that we may believe that he is our loving Father and we are truly his children, so that we may ask him with boldness and confidence, just as loving children ask their loving father for what they need.”

Martin Luther

“What is Prayer?” Before we can proceed any deeper, we must confront this seemingly simple question. When some disaster happens, it is a reflex to “*send our thoughts and prayers*” but rarely do we stop and think what that actually means. When I was a hospital Chaplain, the *National Institutes of Health* conducted a study on “prayer” and clinical outcomes, but they were necessarily vague and general as to what constituted “prayer”—everything from formal, written prayers to “*positive thoughts and vibes*”—all of these were put forth as “Prayer” for the study. And, I suppose that, most of us, if pressed, would answer the question in a vague fashion as well.

As with so many things, we perhaps can answer the question “*What is Prayer?*” by looking first to our Lord Jesus Christ. If you read the Gospels, we find our Lord praying. He prays before he feeds the multitudes, he prays before his Passion and death, he prays at his Baptism. In fact, when we stop and look at it, we find Jesus praying all the time. And most of these times are disruptions in the story: he “*withdraws*” to pray, he stops what he is doing to pray... Prayer, in other words, for Jesus, is intentional and important enough to actually stop the action of what’s going on. Intention, therefore, is important for prayer. Can we pray “*by accident*”? Perhaps, but we shouldn’t rely on it. This is why, for instance, Jesus gives his disciples “*a way*” to pray, which we call *The Lord’s Prayer*.

This makes sense, when you stop and think about it. One of the common answers to the question, “*What is Prayer?*” is “*talking with God*.” This is the start of a substantial answer to the question and the basic rules of conversation apply. Think, for a moment, when you attempt to “*talk with*” someone whose attention is divided—they are doing something with their phone, the TV is on, and they are humming a tune. How does that “*conversation*” go? Not well. Instead, when we are serious about a conversation, we “*turn off*” the TV, we “*put down*” the phone or tablet, and we “*stop what we are doing*” so we can truly listen to what is being said and the person saying it. Not only that, we take time to *speak* but we also make time to *listen*. If Prayer is “*talking with God*” then we must do something in order to make space for that conversation to take place.

This reveals something important about where our definition and meanings begin to drive us from those who define prayer as “*sending positive thoughts and vibes*.” It is true that “*knowing someone cares what happens to you*” is a net positive (that’s what the NIH study found), it is not what we mean by using the word “Prayer.” Prayer has an object—we’re not in tune with “*the universe*,” but Almighty God himself, who is the Creator. It is God who seeks a relationship with *US*, and prayer is our answering that call.

Ponder that for a moment: God, who created the universe, seeks to talk with you. Is that not worth stopping “*what you are doing*”? Imagine, the Creator seeks an audience with you, his

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beloved Creature! Your loving Father in Heaven wants nothing more than to hear from you his beloved child; how you're feeling, what you're doing, what you're afraid of. Who would not stop to have such a conversation?

But the "*speaking*" is only half of any conversation; *listening* is also part of a conversation. How apt are you to stop and listen for God's response to your prayer? Do you make time to hear what God has to say back "*to you*"? Prayer is never "*in vain*," God truly listens to what we say and what we need, every prayer is heard by your Father in Heaven. The only real question is whether or not we will hear what our Heavenly Father's response is. And that will be for next week.

Pax Christi;
Pr. Jerry Kliner, STS



Sunday, September 20, 2026

SERVICE ASSISTANTS	9:30 AM	Sunday, September 13
Ushers	Mike Larson, Brian Bair, Al Cole, Sally Congdon, Kim Brofee	Attendance: In Church: 94 Online: 6 Offering: \$5,284.36
Lay Assistant	Dave Bausinger	Articles for the Messenger/Bulletin are due in the office by Monday at noon!
Communion Assistant	Sherri Holtzman	
Acolyte	Doriann Morris	
Altar Guild	Jody Fullmer, Jeannie Bower	
Greeters	Georgette Copp, Ray Demarest	
Flower Delivery	Paul Weaver	
Cantor	Mike Yoder	

IN BLESSED MEMORY

The Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of James D. Wither III (Jamie) by his daughter and son-in-law, Vanessa and Brett Hollfelder and grandchildren, Ali Rudinski and Gordie Emick.

The Bud Vase is given to the glory of God and in loving memory of James D. Wither III (Jamie) on the anniversary of his birth into heaven, September 20, 2014 by his wife, Kathy; son, Sean Wither; and grandson, Jackson Summers.

BIBLE READINGS

Sunday, September 20: *Jonah 3:10-4:11; Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16*

Monday, September 21: *Psalms 106:1-12; Genesis 27:1-29; Romans 16:1-16*

Tuesday, September 22: *Psalms 106:1-12; Genesis 28:10-17; Romans 16:17-20*

Wednesday, September 23: *Psalms 106:1-12; Isaiah 41:1-13; Matthew 18:1-5*

Thursday, September 24: *Psalms 25:1-9; Ezekiel 12:17-28; James 4:11-16*

Friday, September 25: *Psalms 25:1-9; Ezekiel 15:5-18; Acts 13:32-41*

Saturday, September 26: *Psalms 25:1-9; Ezekiel 18:19-24; Mark 11:27-33*



The Eucharistic Ministers will be sent out this Sunday, September 20th.



Preschool Mums Fundraiser! Don't forget to get your mum tickets. They are \$10 each and available Sunday morning in the Narthex or in the church office. You will be able to take your tickets to the Potting Bench any time in September and choose your very own 9-inch potted mum(s). Deadline for picking up mums will be September 30.

THANK YOU for your support!



MLP Gift Card Bingo is Saturday, October 24 at 11:30 am.



Presale tickets are \$20 and at the door \$25. Tickets will be available before and after each service in the Narthex on these dates: **Sunday, September 20th and 27th or anytime in the church office.** **To make this event a success we are asking the congregation for your support. Ways you can help:** donate a gift card of your choice for our Gift Card Bingo; make a themed basket to donate for our Chinese Auction; or make baked goods to sell during the event. Deadline for gift cards and themed baskets is **October 16th.** Baked good items are due **Friday, October 23rd by NOON** in the church office. **PLEASE DROP OFF ALL DONATIONS TO THE CHURCH OFFICE.**



Mountie
Backpack Program

The Mountie Backpack Program, centered here at Messiah, is getting ready for the new school year. These food bags close the gap in meals for children over the weekends and longer holidays. Volunteers are needed to help pack the food bags starting Thursday, September 24 at 1:00 pm in Shaheen Hall. *All are welcome.* Two volunteers are needed to deliver the food bags to South Williamsport Schools; please contact Dianne Larson, 570-220-3702 for more information. Success of this program depends on your help to relieve children's hunger in our area.

Messiah's Women of the ELCA - "Trivia Night" is scheduled for **Saturday, October 3,** at



6:00 pm. to benefit Messiah's Backpack Program. Pizza and beverages will be provided. Bring food to share. Registration is \$8.00 per person; \$15.00 per couple. George Jansson is our Quiz-master. Please come and support this events.



The Fellowship Committee would like to thank everyone who contributed with a dish offering for the church picnic and all who attended. The food was delicious and we all enjoyed great conversation along with playing Bingo.





FALL NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

Messiah's Nominating Committee has been working diligently through the summer months to find interested members to serve on Council. This committee's responsibility is to provide the name{s} of any member who would be interested in serving on Messiah's Congregation Council for a three-year term beginning January 2027.

As we look toward our fall elections, we invite you to pray and seek the Lord about serving His church. We have several important positions open:

- * Congregation Council – members to serve a three-year term
- * Audit Committee – three members to serve a three-year term
- * Nominating Committee - three members to serve a one-year term

If you feel called to serve or would like to nominate someone, please contact Sue Christ, Chuck Luppert, or Rita Strickler, or reach out to the church office.

WE NEED YOU!

Have you considered joining a church committee? It is a wonderful way to support our church mission and share your gifts. Committees meet monthly to discuss ideas, make decisions, and work together in their area of ministry. Interested???

To join a committee, please contact the chairperson listed below.



- * Fellowship Committee – Alice Morrison & Georgette Copp
- * Life Long Faith Formation (Christian Ed/Youth) – Kathryn Pratt
- * Property Committee – Dave Bausinger
- * Mission Outreach Committee – Ron Yeagle
- * Finance Committee – Joanie Jackson
- * Preschool Committee – Mary Schultz
- * WELCA Committee – Ruth Doran

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!!

Pack-a-Sack! ~ Saturday, September 19, 5:00 p.m.

God's Work. Our Hands. We'll start with some fellowship over pizza and then get to work packing the school kits with the supplies that you brought in over the summer.



If you cannot stay for the whole time, that's okay – we are so glad to have you join us for whatever time you can give!

Questions or to sign up at the last minute ~ call or text Kathy at 570-651-2802.



Wedding Banns: Starr Sampsel and Christopher Weaver have announced their intention to be married on Saturday, September 26th. Your prayers are encouraged.



MISSION TO SEAFARERS



Did you realize that **90% of everything we wear, use, and consume**, come to us by merchant ships, operated by 1.5 million seafarers? On ships for 9 to 10 months at a time, the seafarers face many hardships: storms, piracy, abandonment, and loss of contact with their families. Often the only contact they have beyond the ship, the Chaplains provide emotional and spiritual support.

Join in the Chaplains' mission of showing Christ's love.

Remember Matthew 25: 35, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

Help fill gift satchels that the Chaplains deliver to the seafarers, in the weeks before Christmas. Each satchel should contain the following:

1 sweatshirt, unhooded or hooded (the preferred) – size M, L

3 pair of socks, thermal or white gym

1 casual pullover T shirt – size M, L

1 heavy knit winter cap

1 can of nuts or large bar of chocolate

Christmas card

NO ADDITIONS AND NO SUBSTITUTIONS

Items need to be at the church by **October 25th**. *Thank you.*



Harvest Home and Blanket Sunday is Sunday, October 4, 2026. Worshippers will be invited to bring forward their gifts of canned goods, boxes of pasta, or monetary offerings for the hungry during the singing of the Offertory.

Donations of fresh produce (pumpkins, potatoes, apples, squash, etc.), cornstalks and gourds to use in decorating are very much needed. *All perishable items* may be dropped off at the church office any time Thursday-Friday, October 2-3, or you may bring the day of the set-up on Saturday, October 3. ***Where does the food go?*** All gifts of food received will be shared with the United Churches Food Pantry. ***Monetary gifts in lieu of in-kind gifts may be placed in plain envelopes marked "Harvest Home." Checks should be made payable to "Messiah Lutheran Church" and be sure to include your envelope number if you would like your offering recorded.*** **Decorating for Harvest Home** will take place on **Saturday, October 3 at 10:00 am.**



Blanket Sunday: Donated blankets and quilts will be distributed by Lutheran World Relief. Please place clean blankets or quilts in the **gray bin** located in the elevator entrance ***no later than October 4.***

Monetary gifts may be placed in an envelope on which you mark "Blankets." Checks should be made payable to "Messiah Lutheran Church." These monetary gifts also will be received during the singing of the Offertory.

ONE NOTE, LWR does not want fleece blankets, BECAUSE people wash them in streams, and the lint pollutes the streams. Thank you for your help.

