



MESSIAH MESSENGER

December 2023



GREETINGS FROM PASTOR DAN

Having a Blue Christmas

In the late 1950s the King of Rock 'n Roll recorded a Christmas song released in 1964. The hit from Elvis Presley was Blue Christmas.

*I'll have a blue Christmas without you
I'll be so blue just thinking about you
Decorations of red on a green Christmas tree
Won't be the same, dear, if you're not here with me*

For many, Christmas is not a happy time of year. Many of us have had close loved ones who passed away during the Holiday season. My grandfather died on December 22 when I was only six.

For others, they see the dazzling lights, shiny tinsel, bright ornaments, and other colorful decorations but they just can't get into all the "glitz" and "glitter" of the season.

Let's call this what it is. Depression. The Holiday Blues. If that is you, then keep reading. The Lord God has His Word of encouragement as you face your blues.

Psalm 34:17-18 ESV:

***When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears
and delivers them out of all their troubles.
The LORD is near to the brokenhearted
and saves the crushed in spirit.***

For those who have faith in Jesus, He knows all too well what you are going through. If we believe He is in our heart then He fully understands the struggles you are facing, the loneliness you are feeling, and the lack of joy you possess.

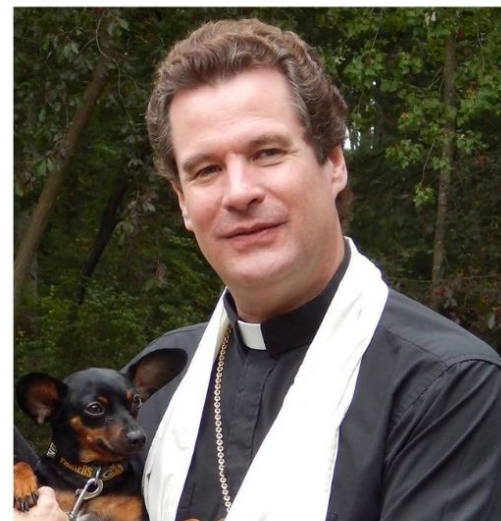
As Elvis sung it:

*And when those blue snowflakes start fallin'
That's when those blue memories start callin'*

Going through depression is not a sin. It is recognizing and experiencing the fallenness of our human nature. Jesus experienced depression when He mourned the loss of His good friend Lazarus. He went through a blue period the night before His crucifixion when His prayers of anguish were so intense that blood (or sweat that looked like blood) poured from Him.

Jesus experienced the ultimate depression being forsaken by His Father when dying on the cross for our sins.

Continued on pg. 2



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the LORD hears and delivers
them out of all their troubles.
The LORD is near to the
brokenhearted and saves the
crushed in spirit.*

Psalm 34:17-18 ESV

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Having a Blue Christmas Continued from Pg. 1

Just know it's okay if you are feeling blue this holiday season. Lift up your regrets, anguish, grief, and depression to the Lord. The Lord hears, He comforts, and He delivers you who are crushed by the memories of this life and the challenges that are before you whether health, money, or relationships.

From your prayers and mediation on God's Word can come help from a professional counselor, medical doctor, or simply releasing your thoughts and feelings in a journal or to a trusted friend. I am certainly here as your pastor to listen as well.

You will be amazed what good company you will be in as others can identify, on one level or another, with your "blues."

Even in the Bible prominent figures of faith struggled with depression. Among them included Noah (He liked a little too much of the fruit of the vine), Joseph (sold into slavery and thrown into prison as an innocent man). David (Threats to his throne from his son), Jeremiah (was thrown in a hole by his captors), the Apostle Paul (beaten and threatened to death by former friends).

Don't let Satan convince you that every day of life should be "sugar and spice and everything nice." Real meaning in life comes when we see purpose in pain, and hope in suffering; humbled to be exalted by the Lord Jesus.

Paul expressed it this way in Romans 8:18 ESV: ***"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."***

This is the glory from the Lord for relief of pain, the joy of forgiveness, and the certainty of His love.

See you in worship, fellowship, and service.

Pastor Dan



Holiday Worship Schedule:

- Sunday, Christmas Eve, December 24: 10am with Holy Communion (Worship Theme: Mary's Songs). No Sunday School or Fellowship
- Sunday, Christmas Eve, December 24: 5pm with no Communion (Worship Theme: Joseph's Songs). Family Candles. Different service from 10am
- Monday, December 25 at 10am: Christmas Day Worship (Worship Theme: Jesus' Songs) with Holy Communion
- Wednesday, December 27 at 7pm: Repeat of Christmas Day Service
- Sunday, December 31 at 10am ONLY with Holy Communion. No Sunday School or Fellowship
- Wednesday, January 3 at 7pm: Repeat of Sunday's service.



Joel Steinke shown helping Eldon K put down blacktop patch as a temporary measure to get the parking lot through the winter. Joel is also very instrumental in keeping the overall grounds cleaned up and looking good.



Many thanks to the church members and family who participated Nov 4 with time and equipment to do some serious tree trimming by the lower parking lot entrance. Pictured left to right Justin Vyborny (Mark's son-in-law), Mark Boos, Bill Swanson, Mike Stocker, Joel Steinke, Carter Stocker and Tim Battist.

Calendar of Events

- December 2, 2023 (Saturday, 9 AM) - Choir Practice - Sanctuary
- December 2, 2023 (Saturday, 10 AM - 2 PM) - Christmas Tree Decorating: The youth group is hosting the tree decorating in the sanctuary again this year, but we need your help. Decorate and enjoy a potluck following. Zach and Samantha Anderson will be providing the main dish and hot cocoa/juice, so please bring a dish to pass and your Christmas cheer! :) If you are planning on attending or have questions, please call or text Samantha (608-312-6683) or Zach Anderson (608-207-0509).
- December 2, 2023 (Saturday, 3 PM - 5 PM) - The Ladies of St. John's Lutheran Church invite all women 7th grade and up, and their guests to "Angels: The Messengers and the Message", an Advent by Candlelight service on Saturday, December 2nd. Refreshments and fellowship from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm Service starting at 4:00 pm- 5:00 pm. Please reserve your tables of 6-8 women. The hostess of that table will be responsible for decorating the table and providing hors d'oeuvres and a dessert. Refreshments of hot chocolate, hot cider, coffee, and punch will be provided. Please RSVP to Christi Bickford at 608-718-7922 or email officestjohnsbeloit@gmail.com
- December 3, 2023 (Sunday, 9 AM and again at 11 AM) - Divine Worship with Holy Communion
- December 5, 2023 (Tuesday, 1 PM) - Adult Bible Study - Sanctuary, on-line, and phone
- December 6, 2023 (Wednesday, 5:45 PM) - Midweek Advent Supper
- December 6, 2023 (Wednesday, 7 PM) - Midweek Advent Service with Holy Communion
- December 9, 2023 (Saturday, 9 AM) - Men's Group in Downstairs Conference Room
- December 10, 2023 (Sunday, 9 AM) - Divine Worship with Holy Communion
- December 10, 2023 (Sunday, 10 AM) - Congregational Meeting
- December 10, 2023 (Sunday, 10 AM) - LWML Hosting Fellowship to raise money for missions
- December 10, 2023 (Sunday, 11 AM) - No 11 AM Worship Service
- December 10, 2023 (Sunday, 12:15 PM) - Lay Elder-Deacon Meeting - Upstairs Conference Room
- December 11, 2023 (Monday) - Giving Tree: The Evangelism Committee will be sponsoring the Giving Tree to provide gifts to children who are residing at the Defy Domestic Abuse Shelter. Gifts will need to be wrapped, tagged and back to church by Tuesday, December 11.
- December 12, 2023 (Tuesday, 1 PM) - Adult Bible Study - Sanctuary, on-line, and phone
- December 13, 2023 (Wednesday, 5:45 PM) - Midweek Advent Supper
- December 13, 2023 (Wednesday, 7 PM) - Midweek Advent Service with Holy Communion
- December 16, 2023 (Saturday, 10 AM) - Christmas Caroling for Homebound Members
- December 17, 2023 (Sunday, 9 AM and again at 11 AM) - Divine Worship with Holy Communion
- December 17, 2023 (Sunday, 11 AM) - Sunday School Christmas Program -
- Sunday School Christmas Program HELP: If anyone has boxes that a child could fit into or extra wrapping paper, and you are willing to donate it to the Sunday School Christmas Program, please call/text Cheryl Sennett (608-289-2686) or Samantha Anderson (608-312-6683).
- December 19, 2023 (Tuesday, 1 PM) - Adult Bible Study - Sanctuary, on-line, and phone
- December 20, 2023 (Sunday, 5:45 PM) - Midweek Advent Supper
- December 20, 2023 (Wednesday, 7 PM) - Midweek Advent Service with Holy Communion
- December 24, 2023 (Sunday, 10 AM) - Christmas Eve with Holy Communion (Mary's Song). No Sunday School or Fellowship
- December 24, 2023 (Sunday, 5 PM) - Christmas Eve with no Communion (Joseph's Song). Family Candles. Different service from 10 AM
- December 25, 2023 (Monday, 10 AM) - Christmas Day Worship (Jesus' Song) with Holy Communion
- December 26, 2023 (Tuesday) - No Adult Bible Study
- December 27, 2023 (Wednesday, 7 PM) - Repeat of Christmas Day Service
- December 31, 2023 (Sunday, 10 AM) - 10 AM ONLY with Holy Communion. No Sunday School or Fellowship

December Birthdays



| | |
|----------------------|-------|
| John Cleveland | 12/1 |
| Cerissa Cleveland | 12/2 |
| David Erickson | 12/2 |
| Kathy Baumann | 12/4 |
| Felicia Foerster | 12/6 |
| Rhett Foerster | 12/7 |
| Kyle Fourtounis | 12/7 |
| Noelle Swanson | 12/7 |
| Bob Altenberg | 12/10 |
| Jackie Thompson | 12/10 |
| Karen Battist | 12/12 |
| Christine Erickson | 12/14 |
| Gail Peterson | 12/14 |
| Randy Cleveland | 12/17 |
| Devin Hessler | 12/18 |
| Craig Redding | 12/18 |
| Olivia Shellenberger | 12/19 |
| Elaine Guetschow | 12/20 |
| Cathy Melby | 12/21 |
| Dan Wojoszynski | 12/21 |
| Bill Swanson | 12/22 |
| Zachary Collins | 12/23 |
| Georgia Laidig | 12/23 |
| Kathy Lynch | 12/23 |
| Jacob Teague | 12/25 |
| Vickie Berryman | 12/27 |
| Crystal Eddy | 12/28 |
| Mary Knueppel | 12/28 |
| Ryan Sennett | 12/28 |
| Sue Luethy | 12/29 |
| Chad Kroning | 12/30 |
| Gary Melby | 12/30 |
| Elaine Stageman | 12/30 |
| Tanya Wells | 12/30 |
| Sanci Foerster | 12/31 |
| Collin Beighley | 12/31 |

December Anniversaries



| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Ken & Nettie Strand | 12/1/2007 |
| Kevin & Patty Divine | 12/26/1983 |

Sugar Cream "Hoosier" Pie



Ingredients:

- All-purpose flour, for work surface
- 1/2 recipe Basic Pie Dough
- 1/4 c. corn starch
- 1 1/4 c. sugar
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 1/2 c. heavy cream
- 1/2 c. (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into pieces
- 1 tbsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1/8 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg

Directions:

Step 1

Preheat oven to 375°F with racks in middle and bottom positions. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil. On a lightly floured work surface, roll dough to a 12-inch circle. Fit it into the bottom and up the sides of a 9-inch pie plate. Trim, leaving a 1-inch overhang; fold overhang under and crimp as desired. Freeze 20 minutes. Line pie shell with aluminum foil and fill with pie weights or dry beans, pressing all the way to the edge. Place on prepared baking sheet. Bake, on bottom rack, 25 minutes. Carefully remove foil and pie weights and prick bottom of pie shell several times with a fork. Bake until edges are golden brown and bottom of pastry is dry and lightly golden, 15 to 20 minutes. Cool completely on a wire rack.

Step 2

Whisk together corn starch, sugar, and salt in a medium saucepan. Gradually whisk in cream. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, whisking constantly. Remove from heat; whisk in butter until smooth. Whisk in vanilla. Immediately pour into pie shell. Sprinkle with cinnamon and nutmeg.

Step 3

Bake until filling is bubbling and crust is deep golden brown, 18 to 20 minutes. Cool completely on a wire rack. Refrigerate, uncovered, 4 hours or up to overnight.



A note from Jim and Susie Waters:

We would like to invite all boards and church members to be a part of our church newsletter. If you know of upcoming events, have inspirational quotes, great recipes for the upcoming month, or have any other church or community news that you think would fit well with our congregation please let us know by email (Messiahlutherannewsletter@gmail.com), and we will do our very best to get your news entered in as soon as possible.

Thank you and God's blessings to you all.

PANTRY NEWS

The Messiah pantry continues to be blessed by continued growth. We were able to get 28 turkeys free from second harvest food bank. We then purchased 50 more from Walmart for a total of 78.

We added 10 whole chickens in order to have enough for our clients. As it turned out, we had our highest client count to date with 108. We had enough food to handle the high number, praise the Lord. We were very happy to be able to hand out turkeys and complimentary thanksgiving food items.

We have passed the final stages of our grant and have been awarded \$7,500, which we will receive sometime in January 2024. We have also been blessed by monetary donations received from one of our members and also from St. John's . We thank God for those donations that help us so much. We also want to thank those who donated items at the special Thanksgiving service. We continue to move forward with very similar plans for our Christmas pantry on December 6th., where we plan to give hams to our clients. We praise God for all the pantry workers who work so diligently together to make sure that the pantry continues to move forward in its effort to serve God and this community.

The Messiah Pantry



Messiah Lutheran Church
Food Pantry

Our Food Pantry is located at 1531 Townline Ave, and is open on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm for all residents of the Greater Beloit Area!





Thanks to a generous gift from Messiah member, Joyce Elwood, Evangelism donated a total of 94 undergarment items for women, children and men to Dwelling Angels, a local outreach service for homeless Beloit residents.

Numerous bags of clothing and shoes given to Evangelism were donated to the shelter at St. Johns.



New Communion Vessels were blessed by the Lord on Sunday, November 5 and Wednesday, November 8. At the September 17 Congregational Meeting Messiah Members voted for new Communion ware paid for by generous donations. The vote came after months of discussion how best to replace the old items used in the distribution of the Lord's Supper, especially the chalice. Thank you to the Altar Guild for all their help in making this a joyous occasion.



Messiah Members and Friends handmade these blankets and prayer shawls. These Crafty Christian creators include Linda Stocker, Cindy Zimmerman, Donna Steinkellner, Elaine Stageman, Kay Froelich, Sue Rogers, and Dorothy Helms. Pastor Dan asked the Lord God to bless them during worship services on Sunday, November 26. The blankets will be given to Orphan Grain Train, a Lutheran ministry blessing needy households with acts of mercy. And the Prayer Shawls will be used in the ministry to Messiah members and friends. Thank you, ladies, for all your hard work as expressions of faith to glorify our Lord and Savior.



Lance Bukove was installed as the 8th Lay Elder-Deacon on Sunday, November 5 during the 9am worship service. He joins the board with Jeff Sennett, Mark Boos, Bob Altenberg, Chuck Baumann, Garrett Cook, and Karl Wetzels with Zach Anderson serving as the Chair. Thanks for all the work our Lay Elder-Deacons do in assisting Pastor Dan with the worship services and Bible studies, and advising him on various pastoral matters.



Thank you to Messiah Members and Friends for donating above and beyond for Audio Bible Sticks. On Sunday, November 12 and Wednesday, November 15 a special door offering was taken along with donations during Fellowship Time and a match from Evangelism yielding a total of \$1083. A check for that amount was sent to Faith Comes By Hearing. A donor to their organization will match our donation yielding 86 audio Bible Sticks that will be given to our US Armed Services members. They will be made available when they request them from a military chaplain. Praise the Lord for more people hearing the Word of God to create and strengthen saving faith in Jesus.

Poinsettias

If you are donating a poinsettia for the Advent season please place it on the table in the hallway. Poinsettias will be brought into the sanctuary for each service and then returned to the table for watering and light. Thank you.



LUTHERAN CHICK'S SHOPPING SPREE

CALLING ALL THE LADIES AT MESSIAH!

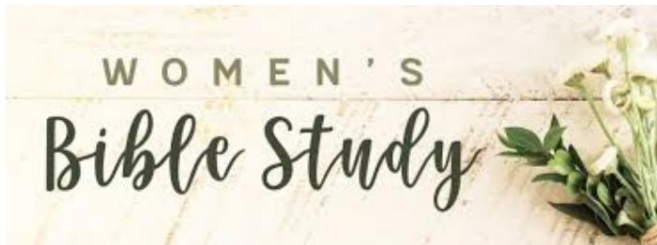


HEY, LADIES! COME JOIN US AS WE CATCH BARGAINS AND DEALS WHILE WE SHOP AT JOHNSON CREEK ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 2024!! WE'LL MEET IN THE LOWER PARKING LOT, AND LEAVE FROM MESSIAH AT 9.00AM, TRAVELING IN A SPACIOUS DODGE CARAVAN AND ROOMY BUICK ENVISION. WE CAN SHOP, EAT LUNCH AND RETURN HOME BY 4.00PM. SO INVITE YOUR FRIENDS TO COME ALONG TO JOHNSON CREEK WITH US!



Food and Fun was had by all who participated in Messiah's Annual Chili Cookoff event on Saturday, November 11 in the Fellowship Hall. Steve and Sue Miller won Best Overall Chili and Best Original Chili. They are good friends to members Tim and Karen Battist. Member Chrissy Behl won Best Table Decorations and Best Chili Dog. Cindy Zimmerman won Spiciest Chili. After dinner there was Euchre Tournament. Thank you for all who attended.





Interested in studying the Holy Bible with other women? Do you want to use your faith in the 'real world'? The Ladies' Bible Study Class begins Thursday, January 18, 2024, at 5:30pm in the downstairs conference room. The Epistle of James, Jesus' brother, is the writer of the first book that we will study. Study materials and refreshments are provided. As we fellowship together, we will build a community of strong women.



Vickie Dansbury would like to say Thank you, Prayer Chain Members, for your strength, love, and support!



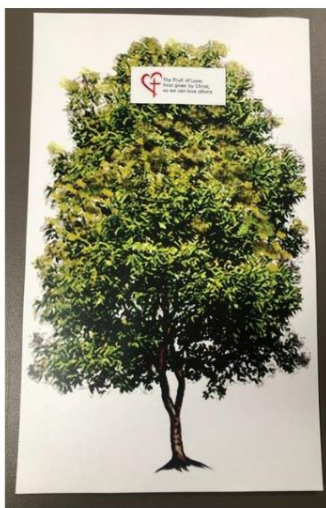
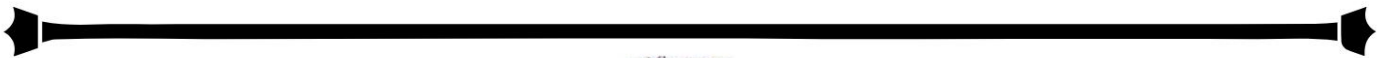
**LWML Prayer Rally
Tuesday, January 9 – 1-2pm at
Messiah Lutheran Church
Open to All**

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful,” Colossians 4:2 NIV

- Brothers and sisters in Christ, we live in a time of great need in our nation: increasing political turmoil, continuing social strife, a dysfunctional economy, challenges in our congregations, and constant struggles with our families. We have a strong desire for restoration of peace, health, prosperity, and faith in Christ.
- In order for us to see any of this, we first start with prayer. So, Tuesday, January 9, Messiah Lutheran Church will hold an LWML Prayer Rally from 1-2pm.
- It is open to everyone, men and woman. We will meet in our sanctuary, sing hymns, hear Scripture and a devotion, and take your prayer requests. We will pray from the altar or at your pew. You can speak your prayer request or write it down.
- Also, we are inviting all our sister congregations to join us: LWML Zone 20, Circuits 23-24, Christ Our Savior, Roscoe, and St Andrew, Rockton.
- Questions? Comments? Or to add a prayer request. Please call or text Pastor Dan at 314-775-7371. God's blessings and we are looking forward to your participation.



Midweek Advent Suppers returned to Messiah on Wednesday starting November 29. Various members are hosting homemade meals for members and friends to enjoy before the Midweek Advent services at 7pm. Meet at 5:45pm and enjoy food and fellowship. Thanks to Messiah's Prayer Chain for hosting the first dinner. Supper will be Wednesdays, December 6, 13, and 20.



“More of Christ’s Fruit in Your Diet” is this year’s Midweek Advent Suppers and Services...Wednesdays November 29, December 6, 13, and 20. We dine together at 5:45pm with meals hosted by congregation members and groups. Then we worship together at 7pm. Each week one fruit of the Holy Spirit is explored from Galatians 5:22-23. Worshippers will receive items on behalf of the congregation to help you remember the gift God gives through His Word. See pictures for an example.



OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS!



We learned that Praying is just like a sandwich. We all start prayer in similar ways, "Dear God," and end prayer in similar ways, "In Jesus Name, Amen." However, we can put anything in the middle because we can talk to God about anything! After making our sandwiches we took turns praying using the sandwich model.



We also put together 100 cards with army figurines. The Sunday school students will be passing them out as a reminder to pray for our Active Duty Military and Veterans on November 12th.

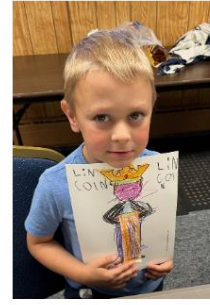


In Sunday school we learned about how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were thrown into a fiery furnace because of their faithfulness to God, King Nebuchadnezzar, came to witness their execution—but he was stunned to see not three but four men in the fire. King Nebuchadnezzar recognized the divine nature of the fourth person. God's miraculous show of power caused him to praise the Lord. No matter what problems we face on earth, we know that God is in control of all things. His plan for salvation will always end in a victory for us.





King Josiah tried to lead the people of Judah back to God. When he ordered the temple of the Lord to be cleaned and repaired, the high priest found the Book of the Law that had been lost and forgotten. Convicted by the words in the book, Josiah gathered all of the people together and read the Book of the Law to them. Although the Word of God had been in the temple all along, it had not been read. God saw Josiah was really sorry and repented and so He promised to spare him from Judgement and show him grace.



We talked about how a candy bar is like God's Word. You can leave it out on the table and look at its pretty wrapper, but unless you open it and take a bite you won't really be getting the full experience. God's word didn't stop being true because it was hidden. It was there all along, but until you find it, and open it, you don't know how good it is.



YOUTH NEWS



Christmas Tree Decorating

December 2, 2023 (Saturday, 10 AM - 12 PM (noon)) - Christmas Tree Decorating: The youth group is hosting the tree decorating in the sanctuary again this year, but we need your help. Decorate and enjoy a potluck following. Zach and Samantha Anderson will be providing the main dish and hot cocoa/juice, so please bring a dish to pass and your Christmas cheer! :) If you are planning on attending or have questions, please call or text Samantha (608-312-6683) or Zach Anderson (608-207-0509).