

Messiah Lutheran Church Transition Team Research Summary

(Key points summarizing input as of June 16 2022. This research does not reflect the opinions of the Transition Team. It is provided to stimulate discussion.)

We are “God’s People Reaching Out” as manifested in our worship and outreach programs.

As stated in our Constitution, our purpose is to participate in God’s mission by worshiping God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments.

We have a long history of liturgical services of worship which are Biblically centered, and the Word of God is preached. We have a history of being a “People of the Word” driven by the Revised Common Lectionary.

We are a “cerebral” congregation (our brains are not left at the door) with a history of preaching and education that enlightens and educates the context and meaning of the scripture.

We have a strong music program that is an “intentional” part of worship, i.e. it is designed to reinforce and promote worship. It is not a concert or performance, but it is well known in the community and serves as a strong outreach tool.

We have a strong history of supporting numerous outreach programs focused on the poor and oppressed in our community and worldwide, including Lutheran World Relief, Kit Ministries, Comforters, Lunches for Learning, Weekend Lunch Program, House of the Harvest, Owen’s House, and many, many more.

We are one of the strongest churches (outreach, music, attendance, membership, finances) in the Southeastern Synod in one of the fastest growing communities in Alabama.

Our congregation is predominantly white. Our diversity does not reflect the community.

Our Christian education program has been affected by a number of factors, including Covid, competing school and sports activities (the kids are overloaded), and the lack of a full-time youth director or pastor.

A youth pastor should be devoted to youth.

Covid has caused overall attendance to decrease significantly. Sunday School attendance is down. It was down before Covid.

Worship attendance following Covid has plateaued around 120-130 in person, with 60-80 online. Prior to covid we had an average attendance around 200.

We have an outstanding worship “streaming” team and production. This is an effective outreach tool.

There has been essentially no change in church giving from 2017 to today.

All church mortgages will be paid off around September 2023. This has been the result of mortgage contributions of about \$120,000 per year.

The parsonage is paid off and valued at \$330,000. There are less than 10 parsonages in the Southeaster Synod. The MLC parsonage could be sold, and the funds used to set up a building maintenance fund.

The church has about \$55,000 in savings and no endowment funds.