

# Pastor's Page

*I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.*  
Jeremiah 29:11

## Dear Members and friends of MLC,

As I began last month's message, I begin this month's message. God is continually challenging each of us and pushing our boundaries, personally and corporately. This happened again with the announcement of my being reassigned to St. Mark's to help them with their Ministry Site Profile.

Over the past few weeks, we have explored what will happen in worship and for Pastoral Care until your next pastor arrives. MLC and I have an agreement where I will provide Pastoral Care for any urgent matters that may arise. If an emergency does arise, please contact Claire or the Church Office Managers, and they will get ahold of me.

I am so proud of you, Messiah! You are learning to go with God's flow and to rely on God to provide you with what you need at this time. You are also becoming more comfortable with relying on each other instead of relying so heavily on your pastor. You are becoming a deeper "church." You, the people in the pews, are the continuity of this congregation, and you are stronger and more resilient than you could ever imagine. God is with you through the ebb and flow of personal and congregational life!

Remember, some of the new things you try will work out, and others won't, but never stop trying to reach your neighbors with the Good News of God's love for all people in new and different ways.

Over these past several months, we have worked together on many things. You have come a long way, and you are not the same people I met on February 1. We are not called to be a people of stagnation, but a people of change. I pray you continue to stretch and challenge yourselves. You have worked too hard to get to where you are today. There is excitement of newness in the air here. Continue to let that excitement flow!

Last, but not least, I want to extend my deepest thanks for the sending and Christmas cards and gifts. They are deeply appreciated and will be cherished.

Your Sister in Christ,

*Pastor Diana Bottin*

## January Highlights

**Jan. 8 - Lois Graff Appreciation Reception January 8 in Parish Hall.** See page 3 for reception details and page 7 for her announcement.

**Jan. 15 - The first of two Town Hall Meetings to discuss the disposition of the parsonage at 9:45 a.m. in the Parish Hall.** See page 5 for details.

## Pastoral Care at MLC until our Next Pastor Arrives

For urgent or emergency Pastoral Care, members should first contact Claire Strand at [claire@mlutheran.org](mailto:claire@mlutheran.org) or the church office at (256) 721-0041 during business hours (M-F, 8:30 a.m. to Noon). See Pastor Diana's message, left.

## Pastoral Transition Resources:

[www.mlutheran.org/pastoral-transition-resource-page](http://www.mlutheran.org/pastoral-transition-resource-page)

## JANUARY SERVICES OF WORSHIP

LBW = Lutheran Book of Worship | WOV = With One Voice

Date:	Sundays at 8:30 a.m.	Sundays at 11 a.m. & Livestreamed*
January 1	Service of the Word	Service of the Word
January 8	LBW Setting 2 w/LS	LBW Setting 2 w/LS
January 15	LBW Setting 1 w/LS	Contemporary Service w/LS
January 22	Now the Feast w/LS	Now the Feast w/LS
January 29	WOV Bread of Life w/LS	WOV Bread of Life w/LS

\*All livestreamed services are available on [www.mlutheran.org/online-services/](http://www.mlutheran.org/online-services/)





**Claire Strand**  
Director of Outreach

claire@mlutheran.org

**Contact Claire Strand if you would like to announce significant transitions in the life of our community of faith, including** birth, death, Baptism, graduation, Confirmation, job change, relocation, engagement, marriage, or any other life passage!

**Claire Strand also leads Messiah's Prayer Ministry.** If you or a loved one needs to be lifted up in prayer, email [claire@mlutheran.org](mailto:claire@mlutheran.org)

## OUTREACH

### PANTRY ITEM

Canned Soup

### KIT MINISTRY

4 oz Bars of Soap  
(Any brand but only 4 oz)

Members may also designate offerings to:

**Food Pantry  
&  
Kit Ministry**

# Outreach

*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

Ephesians 2:10 ESV

## Life Passages

†Peggy Hanna announces the birth of a great-granddaughter. She was born on November 30th.

## Outreach Spotlight: Owen's House For Women and Children

### Owen's House Serving Line Volunteers Needed

Since November of 2019, MLC has partnered in mission with *Owen's House for Women and Children*. This MLC Outreach initiative was developed in two parts by MLC members Bill and Marcie Emerson, a retired dietician.

The first part was to provide consistent financial support so that healthy food is more available to those who eat at *Owen's House*. *Owen's House* found it challenging to consistently provide fresh dairy and produce due to supply and cost, and they were often limited to serving shelf-stable food and food donated from restaurants and government food programs.

The second part was to have MLC volunteers serve dinner at *Owen's House* twice a month. Currently it's a small handful of MLC volunteers helping serve dinner on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of each month. More volunteer servers are sought to share the schedule and fill in when a volunteer is unavailable.

No cooking skills are required! Just bring a friendly smile and a commitment to be there at 4:45 p.m. and help until 6:00 p.m. There are two dinner services and there often is a short break to sit for a few minutes with those in the first group. The second service provides food for women and children who come in.

Serving at *Owen's House* is a family-friendly service opportunity for those with older school-aged children. Now that COVID-19 restrictions have eased, children ages 10 and older can work the serving line with a parent or guardian accompanying them. Youth ages 16 and up can volunteer independently.

Before you volunteer, you first need to sign a Service Covenant form and arrange a short training session with Bill Emerson at [bemerson@knology.net](mailto:bemerson@knology.net). Bill also coordinates the volunteer schedule.

Not able to serve on Mondays? Please consider supporting *Owen's House* with your financial gifts. Please write "Owen's House" on your offering envelope, check memo line, or select it on our Vanco giving portal. Thank you.

*Owen's House for Women and Children is located on the Downtown Rescue Mission Campus in Huntsville. They provide overnight shelter for women and children and provide Biblically based training programs for women to help them end the cycle of poverty.*

<https://www.downtownrescuemission.org/owens-house>

# Music & Worship Notes

.... but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:18b-20

## Ring and Sing Concert

Thank you to all who participated in and supported the 24<sup>th</sup> annual Ring and Sing Concert. Donations of \$267 will benefit the Madison Public Library. [View the Concert \(YouTube\)](#) -- [View the Digital Photo Gallery](#)

## Music, Music, Music!

Come to sing, ring, and play instruments to the glory of God. Below are groups and locations.

Cherub Choir (PK-1 <sup>st</sup> )	Wed 6-6:30pm	Room 7	Bonnie Flowers, director
Seraph Choir (2 <sup>nd</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> )	Wed 6-6:30pm	Room 11-12	Laura Simeone, director
Notabella (7 <sup>th</sup> -Adult)	Wed 6:30-7:30pm	Fellowship Hall	Rhonda Gaede, director
Messiah Choir (7 <sup>th</sup> -Adult)	Wed 7:30-8:30pm	Sanctuary	Randall Fields, director
Instrumental Ens. (7 <sup>th</sup> -Adult)	Sun 12:15pm (bi-wk)	Sanctuary	Larry Frakes, director

## Farewell and God's Blessings to MLC

Farewell to you, my beloved family in Christ. Thank you for the lessons you have taught me over the years in "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (from Galatians 5:22-23). May God bless your ministries as you live out God's purposes for Messiah Lutheran Church in this community and the world!

In the coming months as the search committee works to find the best person to serve as your new Director of Music Ministries, you will have excellent leadership in Randall Fields, who will be planning services of worship and arranging for worship music accompaniment. Directors Randall, Rhonda Gaede, Ric Birdsong, Larry Frakes, Bonnie Flowers, and Laura Simeone will continue the existing music groups with children and adults. You are well equipped to meet what lies ahead with grace and faithfulness. Thanks be to God! ~ Lois Graff

## Farewell and Thank You Reception for Lois Graff Sunday, January 8, 2023

- ♥ Special recognitions, musical offerings, and Godspeeds for Lois at both services of worship.
  - ♥ A Reception in her honor will be at 9:45 a.m. in the Parish Hall
    - ♥ All are encouraged and invited to attend!
  - ♥ A basket for personal cards and gifts will be in the Narthex through January 8th. There is also a large card that you may sign through the January 8th reception.

Please contact the church office if you have further questions at [office@mlutheran.org](mailto:office@mlutheran.org)

[Please use this SignUp to Assist with the Reception](#)

**Messiah Youth****Junior & Senior Youth:**

Interim POC  
Sarah Walker  
youth@mlutheran.org

**MOES:**

Currently Vacant

**MLC's Youth Groups**

**MOEs (Messiah Older Elementary)** - grades 3-5  
**Junior Youth** - grades 6-8  
**Senior Youth** - grades 9-12

**Christian Education****Bonnie Flowers**

*Council Representative for Youth & Education*  
education\_rep@mlutheran.com

**Janet Sullivan/Chris Berry**

*Co - Sunday School Superintendents*  
sundayschool@mlutheran.org

**Sunday School**

Jan 1: No Sunday School

Jan 8: Shortened Sunday school classes after attending reception for Lois.

Jan 15: Kit ministry activity for all ages (MLK weekend).

Jan 22 & 29: regular Sunday school



# Messiah Youth & Faith Formation

**Thank you MLC Families & Youth****Advent Candle Readers**

Thank you to all who participated in the Advent readings and candle lighting. It was nice to see the creativity each family used to split up the tasks and to see how many people were trying something new! Adults learned to light candles and children as young as second grade read passages from the pulpit. It is always moving to see the joy and excitement of children when they are contributing in the worship service.

Please enjoy many of these moments in the December Online Photo Gallery! - Bonnie

**Those involved with the Dec. 18, & Dec. 21 Services of Worship**

Thank you, MLC Children and Youth who presented the Christmas Story at these services and served as musicians and worship assistants.

**YOUTH SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY****Both Groups meet at 5:00 p.m.****Youth schedule for January:**

Jan 8: Welcome back! Hot brownie sundaes and large group game

Jan 15: MLK weekend; no youth meeting

Jan 22: Fourth Sunday dinner

Jan 29: Game night. Bring your favorite board or card game and a snack to share. Drinks will be provided.

**So long as there are enough adult volunteers, each group will have time to gather separately at these combined meetings.**

**Teachers Sought!**

If you've walked the halls during the Sunday School hour on Sunday mornings, you've likely seen and even heard our children's and youth classes. Each class is deepening their knowledge and having some fun along the way. To keep this ministry alive, we need your help. We are looking for adults (age 25 or older) to serve in this ministry.

**We Need:**

- Substitute teachers to fill in when a teacher is sick or traveling
  - Teachers for a new class for ages 2-3
  - Youth Group assistant
- If you are willing to help with this ministry, please contact Janet Sullivan or Bonnie Flowers.

## MLC News Flashes...

**Town Hall Meetings to  
Discuss the Disposition of the Parsonage  
Jan. 15 & Feb. 5  
9:45 a.m. Parish Hall & via Zoom  
(These meetings will also be recorded)**

Congregation Council recommends that the Congregation sell MLC's Parsonage. A set of charts that led the Council to this recommendation is posted on MLC's Protected Documents webpage, below.\*

**Please review these slides carefully prior to the town hall meetings & the Special Congregation Meeting Feb. 12.** Please do not share these slides outside of MLC.

<https://mlutheran.org/documents/>

The two "Town Hall" style meetings will allow us to discuss the path forward for the Parsonage as a Congregation. **This decision is a Congregation decision.** After these discussions, there will be a vote on the disposition of the parsonage at a **Special Congregation Meeting planned for February 12 at 9:45 a.m. in the Parish Hall.** **If you have questions about the Council recommendation, please contact me or a member of Council to discuss.** Thank you for your careful consideration. If you cannot view the slides, paper copies are available at the church office through January.

### Call Process Update

The Call Committee has recommended that the Congregation Council proceed to the next step in the call process with a candidate. The Council and Call Committee will interview this candidate on Jan 5, 2023.

New Year's Blessings,

Greg Kilby, MLC Council Vice President

*This page is password protected. Please contact the church office during regular business hours if you need assistance. (256) 721-0041 or office@mlutheran.org*

### KIT MINISTRY

**will resume on January 12, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.**

Prefer to help at home? There are many ways to be a Kit Ministry "minion."

**POC: Rhonda Gaede :**

### MLC COMFORTERS

**meets Tuesday mornings 9:00 a.m.—Noon and resumes Jan. 3**

**Interested in being a Comforter?** Contact Jeanette Beamer

## Holy-Day Giving 2022

Thank you for being the hands and feet of Christ this holiday season!

Your prayers for Advent hope guided the world through the darkness!

You also...

- ♥ helped provide 100 turkey dinners to local families in need
- ♥ provided warm clothing and coats for clients at the Downtown Rescue Mission
- ♥ cheered 20 children from the Salvation Army Angel Tree program on Christmas morning with gifts of toys, clothing, and a handmade blanket
- ♥ collected an abundance of toys and necessities for Christmas Charities Year Round, with \$125 of them purchased through children's offerings
- ♥ provided warm clothing, coats, and sundries to women and children at Owen's House
- ♥ collected 12 lbs of pop tabs for Ronald McDonald House in Birmingham (1 lb = 1,430 tabs)
- ♥ donated \$300 to the Madison Public Library from the Ring and Sing concert
- ♥ fed children in Honduras by purchasing homemade jams and tree ornaments
- ♥ shared excess greeting cards and notepads to clients of Enable (formerly CASA)
- ♥ assembled 54 gift boxes for Operation Shoebox
- ♥ brought beauty to the sanctuary and honor to loved ones with purchases of poinsettias
- ♥ made felt Christmas trees and bead wreaths for clients of Enable (formerly CASA)
- ♥ funded numerous missions through Messiah's giving mall
- ♥ supplied precious resources such as bees, goats, and chicks worldwide through the ELCA's Good Gifts program.

## January Reminders

- Pick up your 2023 Giving Envelopes. They have been moved to member mailboxes.
- Ministry Leaders—please help our Treasurer close up the 2022 financials by making sure all 2022 expenses are turned in and any reimbursement checks you've been issued in 2022 are cleared through your bank.



# Month in Pictures

God bless the little hands of (right) MLC's Cherub choir who colored place-mats for Downtown Rescue Mission's Christmas dinner, and (far right) the Kindergarten and elementary school graduates at Benito Montoya school in Honduras. Through December, many hands of all ages lit the Advent wreath, including the Hopkins family (below), and shopped for infant toys and baby necessities for *Christmas Charities Year Round* (also below). Members of MLC's Church Council gathered on Dec. 15 for an evening of dinner and ax-throwing with Pastor Diana. On Dec. 18, MLC farewelled Pastor Diana at a reception between services. Youth gave her a soccer ball they signed. THERE ARE MANY MORE PICTURES ON THE [DECEMBER ONLINE GALLERY!](#)



## Prayer Families

Please lift these Messiah households in your daily prayers. **On Sundays and holidays, please remember to pray for the groups listed in *bold*.**

### *Lois Graff Announces her Departure as MLC's Director of Music Ministries*

Dear People of Messiah Lutheran Church,

I was accompanying worship at your birth on April 23, 1989 and have loved you since then. You have been in my heart and my prayers through the decades. Now it is time for me to resign as Director of Music Ministries at Messiah Lutheran Church effective December 31, 2022.

Thank you for the privilege of serving beside you in mission for over 33 years. While it is time to leave this calling, I will never forget the joys of growing with you over the decades. This is one of the most difficult decisions I have ever had to make.

The stresses of recent years made it clear that I need to scale back. For over 40 years, I have worked 50-80 hours per week, and that has begun to affect my health. MLC has been my identity for decades, and now I believe God is calling me to a time of respite, listening for where our Lord will lead me next, and to spend more time with family. I plan to continue in my other callings of teaching piano and accompanying vocal and instrumental music.

I believe this timing is best for MLC. Music Ministries at MLC will continue to be strong in the future. There are many gifted, skilled, faith-filled disciples here! God has blessed this church, and with his guidance, that will continue. With the Word of God as your foundation and the cross of Christ before you, hold fast to the hope that is ours in Christ Jesus, our Lord. You are God's beloved children, called and sent to make a difference in the world. Thanks be to God.

Thank you for your love and support through these many years. I will miss you, and you will be in my prayers. May God guide, inspire, bless, and keep you always in God's grace.

In faith, hope, love, and gratitude,

Lois

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13*



# January Birthdays

## We Welcome These New MLC Households

On Sunday, December 11th, we joyfully received into membership the Saari and Finch households.



Jennifer and Matt Saari have lived in Huntsville for 11 years, been married for 8, and have a 20 month old daughter, Katelyn, and two dogs. Originally, Jennifer is from Illinois, and Matt is from Minnesota. They are both meteorologists. Jennifer is a forecaster at the National Weather Service, and Matt is a meteorologist at Baron Weather.



Aaron and Rachel Finch were married in 2008 and moved to Huntsville in 2010. They joined a Methodist church shortly thereafter and served in choir, handbells, and children's worship. Eli was born in 2017 and Mae was born in 2020. The Finches started their search for a new church home in 2020 and finally landed at Messiah in 2021. The Finches like to spend their free time outdoors.



# January 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1 NEW YEAR BLESSINGS!</b> <b>8:30 a.m. Worship:</b> Service of the Word  <b>11:00 a.m. Worship &amp; Livestream:</b> Service of the Word	<b>2</b> 4:45 Owen's House kitchen duty (See pg. 2)	<b>3</b> 9:00 a.m. Comforters	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 7:00 p.m. Kit Ministries	<b>6</b> 10:00 AM. Bridge Group	<b>7</b>
<b>8 Thank You Lois!</b> <b>8:30 a.m. Worship:</b> LBW Setting 2 w/LS 9:45 Reception for Lois 10:15 Sunday School <b>11:00 a.m. Worship &amp; Livestream:</b> LBW Setting 2 w/LS 4:00 p.m. 1st Year Confirmation 5:00 p.m. Jr. & Sr. Youth	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 9:00 a.m. Comforters	<b>11</b> 5:00 p.m. 2nd Year Confirmation 5:30 p.m. Wednesday Night Dinner 6:00 p.m. Cherub and Seraph Choir 6:30 p.m. Notabella rehearsal  7:30 p.m. Messiah Choir rehearsal	<b>12</b> 7:00 p.m. Kit Ministries 7:00 p.m. Church Council Meeting	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <b>8:30 a.m. Worship:</b> LBW Setting 1 w/LS 9:45 a.m. Town Hall Mtg. 9:45 a.m. Sunday School Kit Ministry Packing <b>11:00 a.m. Worship &amp; Livestream:</b> Contemporary Service w/LS	<b>16 MLK DAY</b> <i>(Church Office Closed)</i>  4:45 Owen's House kitchen duty (See pg. 2)	<b>17</b> 9:00 a.m. Comforters	<b>18</b> 5:00 p.m. 2nd Year Confirmation 5:30 p.m. Wednesday Night Dinner 6:00 p.m. Seraph Choir rehearsal 6:30 p.m. Notabella rehearsal 7:30 p.m. Messiah Choir rehearsal	<b>19</b> 7:00 p.m. Kit Ministries	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> <b>8:30 a.m. Worship:</b> Now the Feast w/LS 9:45 a.m. Sunday School <b>11:00 a.m. Worship &amp; Livestream:</b> Now the Feast w/LS  4:00 p.m. 1st Year Confirmation 5:00 p.m. Jr. & Sr. Youth	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 9:00 a.m. Comforters	<b>25</b> 5:00 p.m. 2nd Year Confirmation 5:30 p.m. Wednesday Night Dinner Seraph Choir rehearsal 6:30 p.m. Notabella rehearsal 7:30 p.m. Messiah Choir Rehearsal	<b>26</b> 7:00 p.m. Kit Ministries	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> <b>8:30 a.m. Worship:</b> WOV Bread of Life w/LS 9:45 a.m. Sunday School <b>11:00 a.m. Worship &amp; Livestream:</b> WOV Bread of Life w/LS  4:00 p.m. 1st Year Confirmation 5:00 p.m. Jr. & Sr. Youth	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 9:00 a.m. Comforters	<b>LOOKING AHEAD</b> Feb 5 - Town Hall Meeting on Church Parsonage Feb 12 - Special Congregation Meeting			

LS = Lord's Supper

Messiah Lutheran Church  
7740 Highway 72 West  
Madison, Alabama 35758  
**Return Service Requested**

Non-Profit  
Organization  
US Postage  
PAID  
Huntsville, AL  
Permit No. 454

Messiah Lutheran Church (ELCA) is located at 7740 Highway 72 West, just east of Hughes Road. **Sunday Services of Worship are at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.** Sunday School is at 9:45 a.m. Staffed nursery and hearing assist devices available. Our website is [www.mlutheran.org](http://www.mlutheran.org). Church office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., staffed by our Office Managers. The Church telephone is (256) 721-0041. Email: [office@mlutheran.org](mailto:office@mlutheran.org).

**Newsletter submissions may be sent to Rebecca Mast at [newsletter@mlutheran.org](mailto:newsletter@mlutheran.org)**

**Submissions are typically due the 3rd Sunday of every month. Submit photos to [communications@mlutheran.org](mailto:communications@mlutheran.org)**



The monthly newsletter and calendar for Messiah Lutheran Church (ELCA) Madison, Alabama

MESSIAH

# Messenger

January 2023  
Volume 36, Issue 1

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## Contact Information Messiah Lutheran Church [mlutheran.org](http://mlutheran.org)

7740 Highway 72 West Madison, AL 35758  
Phone: (256) 721-0041  
Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Monday – Friday

### Staff

Claire Strand.....Director of Outreach Ministries  
Bobbey Huwaldt.....Office Manager  
Meredith Kilby...Communications Director, Office Manager  
Randall Fields..... Messiah Choir Director  
Katrina Strand..... Nursery Attendant

**Find up-to-date information at [www.mlutheran.org](http://www.mlutheran.org)**

