



MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH - KELLER, TEXAS

# Messiah Messenger



Messiah Lutheran Church & School  
The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

1308 Whitley Rd. Keller, TX 76248

Church Office: (817) 431-2345

Academy Office: (817) 431-5486

Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School & Adult Bible Class: 9:30 a.m.

Rev. Thomas Chryst, Pastor

[www.messiahkeller.org](http://www.messiahkeller.org)

## What's a Vicar?

by Rev. Thomas Chryst



**Messiah might be getting a vicar! What's that? What do they do? Why are we doing this?**

Messiah has applied to participate in the vicarage program through the two LCMS seminaries. A vicar is simply a man who is a student, studying at the seminary to become a pastor. Your "vicarage" is a year of practical, in-the-field experience at a congregation which has invited to host you. Most men serve as vicars during their 3<sup>rd</sup> year out of 4 of seminary training (like I did). **My vicarage** was at Hope Lutheran Church in Warren, Michigan from the summer of 1997-1998. I still remember fondly many of the people there and cherish the valuable lessons learned during that time. A couple years ago, I even returned to serve as guest preacher as part of their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. **Some, however, delay vicarage** until after coursework is complete, and often are assigned to a "convertible" vicarage – in which after serving for a year of internship they may remain and become pastor (if mutually agreeable), or else be assigned as a pastor elsewhere. Our current seminary student adoptee, Mark Peters, will be going this route in the Spring. *(We will therefore be designating a new seminary student adoptee this year, by the way.)* **Usually the vicar comes in the mid-summer** sometime after finishing up classwork and seminary responsibilities for the year. Sometimes they are single, sometimes married, sometimes even with a large family. Often times they are young men (mid-twenties), but can also be older "second career" students.

**A vicar's main purpose is to learn**, through practice, what it is to be a pastor. Therefore he will be given opportunities to preach, teach, visit, observe meetings, observe events, and participate in various ways in the life and operation of the congregation. He will be supervised by the pastor and receive directions and evaluations per the seminary's usual process. It is possible to "fail" a vicarage, but most men successfully complete their year and go on to finish their studies and serve at their own congregation. **What a vicar cannot do:** Officiate at weddings, funerals, or preside over the Lord's Supper (though he may assist in all of these if appropriate). He doesn't act on his own, but always under the authority of the pastor, who remains responsible for him as well. The congregation ought to remember, at all times, the vicar is a student, and therefore afford him an extra degree of grace and patience as he practices his skills and certainly makes mistakes along the way.

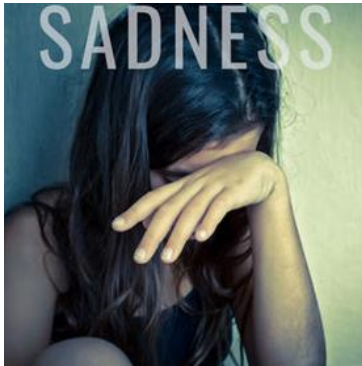
**Very often congregations form a strong bond** with their vicars. It is an exciting time when a new vicar comes and also bittersweet when a man finishes his year and departs. Some congregations participate in the vicarage program for many years. Which, by the way, brings me to another point – **the purpose of the vicarage.** While it is often a blessing to the pastor and the congregation to benefit from the work a vicar does, he is not simply to be seen as "cheap labor" or a lackey for the pastor to dish off unwanted duties. Rather, the congregation is investing significant resources in supporting this man for the year, and in providing him with a crucible in which to learn valuable lessons about the ministry. We are therefore serving both the vicar and the church at large in helping in the formation of a future pastor. It should be seen primarily as one way in which Messiah fulfills the Great Commission, so that the Gospel of Jesus Christ can further be preached unto the ends of the earth. After all, how will they hear, if no one is sent to preach to them? (Romans 10:14) **Sometime in early to mid-April, we should receive word** if we will be assigned a vicar or not. Last year, we also applied, and were not assigned one due to a smaller number of assignments needed. If we do receive one, he could be from either the St. Louis or Fort Wayne seminary, and will be assigned in late April (around the 21<sup>st</sup> or so, usually) at a special service at the seminary. Many will be eagerly watching, even online, as this is always the first announcement of vicarage assignments. I'll provide the information to you, of course, if it works out.

**If you have questions** about the vicarage program, or ideas on how you might be of service to the vicar and his family (if he has one), please let me or the Elders know. Please pray for him, as you hopefully do for your pastor and your congregation. And, Lord willing, we will all be a blessing to each other in the year to come.

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*That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ,  
the Son of God, and that by believing  
you may have life in His name. —John 20:31*



Have you heard the recent news that the Governor of Arkansas signed legislation banning nearly all abortions? The Bill lists the following five reasons why abortion was banned in the State of Arkansas:

- 1) **Abortion is a crime against humanity.**
- 2) **New evidence shows life begins at conception.**
- 3) **Abortion hurts women.**
- 4) **Abortion is unneeded for reliance by women who can now relinquish their children for free up to thirty days after birth through Ark Safe Haven Law.**
- 5) **1-2 million women per year are waiting to adopt newborns.**

Are you struggling with sadness or guilt from a past abortion? You are not alone. There is forgiveness and restoration in Christ! Just under one in four women, about 24% in the US, will have at least one abortion before they turn 45 years old; and nearly four in ten, among these women, claim to be church goers. Are you suffering from Post Abortion Syndrome (PAS) and want to find out more about the forgiveness that comes from Christ through the Gospel? You are not alone.

Silence from the past traumatic experience of an abortion leaves pain that is invisible to friends and family. An invisible pain that disrupts current relationships and eternal restoration. An internalized pain brought about by sin, that Christ has overcome on the cross. Silence is darkness, but Jesus Christ is the Light of the World (John 8:12)—the Light no darkness can overcome (John 1:5). Break the silence; extinguish the pain. Let the Word of the Lord wipe away every tear from your eye (Rev 21:4).

Jesus is the answer to our restoration and there is comfort to be found through the cross. By His perfect life, death, and resurrection, Christ brings us hope. Hope is not a probability; it is a promise. Hope is not a possibility; it is an inheritance. God guards our inheritance by giving us a new identity in Christ. As a baptized child of God, we have a living hope:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be **born again** to a **living hope** through the **resurrection of Jesus Christ** from the dead, to an **inheritance** that is **imperishable**, undefiled, an unfading, **kept in heaven** for you, who by God's power are being guarded through **faith** for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 1 Peter 1:3-5

Our hope in Christ is a living hope. Our identity comes from Christ's victory. St. Paul tells us in Romans 8:37 that, "You are more than a conqueror through Him who loved us." What exactly does it mean to be "more than a conqueror?" This means you are an heir to The Conqueror—your identity is now in Christ—and those things you do today, through faith as a forgiven child of God, are done as an ambassador of Christ. Therefore, when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up, remember your identity in Christ. Remember who you are and whose you are; you belong to Christ. For confidential PAS recovery treatment please email Deaconess.Buhler@gmail.com.

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### ***Bible Studies this Spring***

*Board of Education*

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**Men's Breakfast Bible Study** ~ Join us for the **1st and 3rd Saturdays at 7am**, at **Sunny Street Café** in Keller.

**JOY group** ~Tuesday at **9:30am** in the Fellowship Hall - will break for summer with last class on May 25th.

**Confirmation 1:** **Sundays at 9:30am**, second floor MCLA.

**Confirmation 2** ~Tuesday at **7pm** in the Fellowship Hall. Last class will be April 27th.

# RETIREMENT AND ESTATE PLANNING WORKSHOP

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY:**  
Messiah Lutheran Church  
Board of Stewardship

Saturday, April 24  
9:00 AM to 1:00 PM  
*Sign up link below*

**Featured Presenters:**  
Bisdorf| Palmer Private Wealth Advisors  
Michelle Simpson, Michelle Simpson Law PLLC

"People are always asking me when I'm going to retire. Why should I? I've got it two ways. I'm still making movies, and I'm a senior citizen, so I can see myself at half price."  
**George Burns**

**CHANCES ARE** you fall into one of the following three categories: (1) you are thinking about retirement (sooner or later); (2) you are getting ready to retire; or (3) you are already living in retirement. Obviously, this means that retirement is a big deal for pretty much everyone. So, when is the best time to start thinking about and planning for **your** retirement? Attend our **Retirement and Estate Planning** workshop on April 24 and get valuable insights to help you navigate your way to a successful and enjoyable retirement. This seminar will be especially helpful for those folks who are maybe 10 years or so away from wanting to retire but will also explore key topics that will be of

interest to everyone in attendance. Our presenters, Brian Bisdorf and Luke Palmer of Bisdorf/Palmer, are gifted professionals in the areas of personal and business financial planning and management, providing an array of expertise in tax planning, wealth accumulation, retirement planning, risk management, and business planning. You will learn important information to help you begin, tune-up, or execute your retirement plan.



**CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP** derives from a simple premise: **"The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof..."** Psalms 24:1. Simply stated, we do not own our wealth; rather, we are the stewards of it for the time we have here on Earth. **Estate Planning** from a Christian perspective defines how we will ultimately dispose of or distribute the wealth God has given us in our lifetime - our final act of stewardship, so to speak. We have all heard the popular idiom that only two things are certain in this world - death and taxes. That may or may not be so. But no matter what, taxes are undoubtedly certain, making them an important consideration in estate planning. We are fortunate to have a respected practitioner in wills, trusts, and estate planning as part of our presentation team on April 24. Ms. Simpson will provide important and informative insights into 4 main areas - estate planning, revocable living trusts, probate, and business entities. These are important matters of concern for all and tie in importantly with successful retirement planning.

*Advance sign-ups are requested as snacks, drinks, and lunch are being provided. Check the MLC website and Facebook page for information on how to sign-up to attend. Materials on each topic will also be furnished to attendees.*

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE!**

Link to sign up: Sign Up Genius—[Stewardship Retirement Workshop](#)





## Music Update: Are we DONE yet?

As you may remember, we have been working through the process of learning a new set of music for the communion liturgy, also known as "Divine Service Setting 2," the only setting in our hymnal we had not been using before. Our approach, as recommended by our synod's leading church musicians, had been piecemeal, learning one section at a time. In Advent, we all sang the new Kyrie together, and at Christmas, the choir led us in singing the new Gloria. Throughout Lent, we visited the Agnus Dei, and on Easter Sunday the choir sang the Alleluia and the Offertory. However, the mix-and-match approach we had been following meant that those who relied primarily on the hymnal to follow the service, instead of the bulletin, were having to flip back and forth between services, which was confusing to many. In light of this, we decided to change our approach. About halfway through Lent, we stopped mixing the musical settings of the liturgy, and with the choir singing two parts themselves on Easter, we have now introduced all parts of the new service except for one: the *Sanctus*.

Messiah is no ordinary congregation when it come to singing. We easily out-sing congregations twice our size, and judging from the sound I perceive from the back of the sanctuary, it is hard to imagine many congregations achieving a higher singing decibel to congregant ratio. We sing even the more difficult hymns with enthusiasm, confidence, and a conviction that bespeaks the determination with which we believe that of which we sing. I cannot tell you how many days the sound of the united voices on Sunday lifts my spirit in ways that little else can. I have become convinced there is nothing this church cannot sing. I believe, after the insistence of several members, we are ready to "pull the trigger" and just sing the entire new setting of the liturgy from front to back in one service. And so, without further ado, we will be attempting precisely this, on Pentecost Sunday. This weekend will also be the choir's final service of the spring season, and our annual "music Sunday," so they will be in both services to assist with lesser familiar material and to teach us the new *Sanctus*. Between now and then, we will continue our use of our regular services as they are printed in the hymnal. I look forward to taking this next step in the ongoing development of our worship life together at the end of this Easter season, and I hope that you will continue join your voice not only with the choir at Messiah, but with all the angelic hosts and the saints who have gone before, as we continue proclaim, "Glory to God in the highest!"

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the music ministry, we'd love to hear from you! Feel free to contact the kantor at any time, at [miguel.ruiz@messiahkeller.org](mailto:miguel.ruiz@messiahkeller.org), or at 719.849.0120.

## Messiah Servants hard at work!!

by Paul Lara ~ Board of Trustees



### CHURCH CLEAN UP DAY The Mac Building!



#### Here are some of the things that we got accomplished!

- Hauled off old cabinets and other material surplus items removed for garage sale and or repurposing.
- Smoothed out the rose garden by removing the old roots, and diseased roses.
- Removed a an old tree stump and much more!!



**A HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL WHO CAME OUT TO SUPPORT THIS  
CLEAN UP EFFORT!**

Greetings in Christian Brotherhood!

I would like to inform the congregation about events just past and share some upcoming events. As you know the Council meets 12 times a year with 4 Voters Assemblies. We usually have one additional meeting focused solely on the Budget. Our budget runs from July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>. The Council has unanimously approved a draft budget for presentation to the Voters on April 25<sup>th</sup>. This budget is posted on the church bulletin board and will be disseminated via email as well. I hope everyone will review this and participate!

In addition to the Budget, some of the Council's achievements have been:

- The Treasurer reported MLCA and MLC each outperforming budget yielding a net YTD surplus of \$16,095. The Budget/Spending Plan had a YTD deficit of \$58K.
- Board of Elders published their first Annual Report, completed an Elder Responsibilities Calendar, and created and reviewed a number of policy documents related to protecting Messiah's ministry.
- Board of Education had an Easter Egg hunt between services Easter Sunday. They are planning on Vacation Bible School.
- Board of Evangelism served 16 families in mid-March with our Swaddling Clothes Ministry.
- The Board of Trustees has been very busy (as usual). Here are some highlights - cleaned several offices in the MAC, began working on office space for our Deaconess, replaced the sanctuary water heater, reviewing insurance documents, annual summer maintenance for air conditioning units.
- Stewardship completed the budget and generated several scenarios for council consideration. Scheduled a retirement/estate planning workshop April 24<sup>th</sup> for all members and guests with Attorney Michele Simpson.
- MLCA Board selected Alison Smith as Principal after a very thorough search and interviewing several very qualified candidates, current enrollment is 71, 2021-22 enrollments are at 49 - slightly ahead of last year at this time, the 2021-22 calendar has been approved, re-accreditation is in progress, and contracts are to be issued after budget approval by the voters.

Major Council goals for this year are transparency, efficiency, and establishing year-to-year continuity among our servant leadership.

In Grace and Peace!

Clayton Brandt  
MLC Council President

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## Messiah News and Upcoming Events ~

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**Quarterly Voters Meeting:** This meeting will be held April 25th immediately following the late service (12pm) in the Fellowship Hall. All voting members are encouraged to attend. There is much to discuss on the agenda. If you are not sure of your voting status or would like to become a voting member, please contact Bill Brandt at [wpbd77@yahoo.com](mailto:wpbd77@yahoo.com)

**Board of Stewardship Workshop:** Upcoming Estate and Retirement Planning Workshop presented by the Board of Stewardship will be April 24th. See page 3 for more details.

**Vacation Bible School:** Specific Dates for VBS will be announced soon!

**Braille Ministry:** Youth Event, Sunday, April 25th. Help the Braille Ministry print books. For more details see page 7.

**Vicarage Announcement:** April 26th - Vicarage Assignment Service will announce our future Vicar at 6pm at this link— [Ctswfw.edu](https://Ctswfw.edu)

## MLCA Students Cereal Drive.....

**WE DID IT!!!!** We surpassed our goal! Thank you to everyone from the church and school that donated cereal boxes. We took 282 boxes of cereal over to the Community Storehouse in Keller



Thank you for helping us  
reach this goal!  
It is always greatly appreciated!

## MLCA Announcements ~

**MLCA Announcement:** The MLCA School Board has completed its search for our new principal and **Ms. Alison Smith** has been selected. Ms. Smith has been with MLCA for 10 years and currently serves as our Interim Principal and 2nd Grade teacher. She will finish out the school year and assume her full-time duties as Principal starting with the 2021-2022 school year. We pray God's blessings for her and our school as she takes on this new role.

**MLCA Spring Fundraiser:** It's time for MLCA's Spring Fundraiser! Our goal is to raise \$10,000 for our Athletic Department. If you'd like to donate, please click this link [MLCA Spring Fundraiser](#) or go to [mlcatexas.org](#). We have also created a QR Code for your convenience. Just hover your phone with the camera setting open over the QR Code and the link will appear. Thank you in advance for supporting MLCA!

**April 29th:** MLCA Spring Program

**May 22nd:** Last Day of School—Early Release

**The MLCA Fine Arts Recital** has been rescheduled. Date to be announced soon.





# Youth Group Activities and more!

by Deaconess Buhler



Stay connected by putting the following upcoming youth events on your personal calendar:

**English Country Dance Lessons:** April 9<sup>th</sup>, May 14<sup>th</sup>, June 11<sup>th</sup>. (see information below)

**Braille:** Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup> from 12-3pm. Bring \$5 for lunch and a friend!

**Christ Academy:** June 20-July 3rd (see information below)

**Youth Family Game Day:** April 30<sup>th</sup> from 5-9pm. Bring a game, bring a friend, and bring \$5 for dinner! (Warning: You won't get a pie in the face unless you bet Helena in a game of chess and lose!)

**Higher Things Conference:** "FORGIVEN"

When: July 27th-30th, 2021

Where: Concordia University Austin, TX info:

**TBD Youth Activities:**

Camping Trip: TBD

Garage Sale: TBD

Pool Party: NEED A HOST

For more information contact Messiah's Youth Leader— [erin.mccomack@hotmail.com](mailto:erin.mccomack@hotmail.com)



**Youth Group Text Alerts: Opt-In Today!!** One great benefit to an updated directory, is the opportunity to extend better communication to our Youth members! We have enabled the text alert function in our church software and have begun the process to invite members to sign up. Each Youth member and their parent needs to activate their own cell numbers to receive messages from Erin. Messiah Youth Group Text Alerts has been activated for the purpose of reminders and notifications. If you want to receive Youth Group related alerts and did not receive an invite, please notify Deacon-

ess Buhler and she will send you the email link. Please Note: Only those members who complete the directions from the email invite and choose to opt-in, can receive Text Alerts. This is a one-way text that does not receive replies like a group chat.



**Christ Academy High School:** Don't you want to join us for two-full-weeks of fun at Christ Academy? Christ Academy High School consists of three important elements: confessional catechesis, liturgical worship, and fun activities. Christ Academy is comprised of two schools, Timothy School for men and Phoebe School for women. In the past, Timothy School usually has 40-60 participants and Phoebe school, 20-25.

Whether you are interested in a Career for Christ or are just interested in theology and having a great summer with like-minded Christians, Christ Academy is the event for you! Contact Deaconess Buhler at 972-342-7697 for more information regarding tuition/travel. If we have enough youth interested, we will make it a road trip! Register your child today at <https://www.ctsfw.edu/ctsfw-events/christ-academy/phoebe-school/>.



**English Country Dance Lessons:** Would you like to learn to dance, hang out with youth your age and have a great time while learning how to English Country Dance? Join Instructor Mark Woolsey as he teaches dance lessons every month.

Most lessons are scheduled for the second Friday of each month. Admission is \$5. First timers get in Free! Bring a friend, you both get in Free! Here are the dates for the next three months: April 9<sup>th</sup>, May 14<sup>th</sup>, June 11<sup>th</sup>.



**Braille Announcement!** Are you eager to begin printing books in Braille again? So are we! Youth, grades 7-12th, are welcome to gather down the hill in our Braille Center after second service on Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. Parents do not have to stay, but they will need to pick up their children by 3pm. We will print from around 12-2pm and then play games in the youth room. Bring \$5 for pizza and a friend to help. Let's get this center up and running!

If you need volunteer hours and would like to punch Braille paper at you house, see Ken Blume to sign out a box and puncher. Each box takes about 2 hours to punch.

Messiah hosted the Area College/Young adult group for March. 24 people attended and participated in archery, croquet, bocce. After a visit to the food trucks at Bear Creek Park the group enjoyed the Evening Prayer Service and a Bible Study on Confession and Absolution. Teaching pastors were Pastor Chryst and Pastor Kolb. Private Confession and Absolution was offered and the evening concluded with a campfire and s'mores.



### UPCOMING EVENT!!!



**Teaching and Expressing the Faith Conference ~ Hymns in the Life of the Christian.**

**When:** Saturday, April 24th

**Where:** Hosted by the OU Campus Ministry at  
Trinity in Norman Ok.

**Time:** 10am—3pm

For more details contact Vera Sweet at [vsweet328@gmail.com](mailto:vsweet328@gmail.com)

*WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!!*

## **Texas and the Pro-Life Vote!**

by Deaconess Buhler



Texas Senate voted on 7 Pro-Life Bills in March. All seven bills passed—this is historic! To find out more about these bills and how to be an Gospel motivated voice for mothers and their unborn child, check out these great websites for more information:

- <https://www.texasrighttolife.com/>
- <https://lutheransforlife.org/>
- <https://www.pregnancyhelp4u.org/>

- The Texas Abolition Strategy (SB 1647 by Senator Charles Perry)—This bill will outlaw elective abortions in the State of Texas within 4 years,
- The Preborn Non-Discrimination Act (PreNDA) (SB 1173 by Senator Kelly Hancock)
- The Texas Heartbeat Act (SB 8 by Senator Bryan Hughes)
- Trigger Abortion Ban (SB 9 by Paxton),
- Regulating Abortion-Inducing Drugs (SBill 394 by Lucio),
- Every Mother Matters Act (EMMA) (SB 802 by Paxton), and
- Stop taxpayer-funding of abortion “logistical support” (SB 650 by Campbell)