



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

Rev. Jeremy McDonald, Vicar

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

## F.A.Q.'s

Rev. Thomas Chryst

*We're continuing what we started last month "FAQ's", that is, "Frequently Asked Questions", based on a series that was published on our synod's website, LCMS.org. Some of these Q & A's are borrowed, some are updated, and some I have written myself over the years along the same format. My hope is to address some of the common questions about doctrine and practice that come to pastors. As is often said, if someone asks a question, chances are good someone else is wondering the same thing. And even if you aren't, perhaps these Q & A's will give you a new perspective. If you'd like to submit an FAQ topic, simply drop me a line with your question and I'll put it toward the front of the line!*

-Pastor Chryst

### Q. What is the significance of the seven candles on the altar ?

A. The Altar Guild Manual by Dr. Lee A. Maxwell (Concordia Publishing House, 1996) notes: "The use of candles in the church, like that of crosses, has a long and varied history. In the early church oil lamps were most likely used, with candles becoming more popular later on (apparently in the fourth century). Also, candles (or lamps) were not set directly on the altar at first. Like the cross, lights were set in stands near the altar or sometimes held by assistants. The practice of placing candlesticks directly on the altar appears to have arisen in the 12th century. One of the primary uses of lights, until the invention of the light bulb, was practical: so that people could see in the dark. But the symbolic use of lights, a symbolism that has its roots in the Old Testament (already in Genesis 1:3), is also important.



"The most basic Christian symbolism attached to the use of lights is derived from the statement of Jesus: 'I am the light of the world' (John 8:12).

"Candelabra (singular candelabrum) which hold three, five or seven candles are sometimes referred to as office lights, since they were lighted for the office (non-communion, prayer) services."

The Altar Guild Manual does not note that the seven-canded candelabra are often associated biblically with the "seven golden lampstands" of Revelation 1:20. In Revelation, these symbolize the seven churches of Asia Minor, to which our Lord speaks through St. John in chapters 2-3. Seven is also the number of completeness in Scripture, since the Lord God created the world and everything in it in seven days, and it was "very good" (Gen. 1:31).

**Q. My wife and I, who belonged to different denominations, wish to become more permanently and actively involved in one of the local LCMS congregations. However, I have been too shy to ask the pastor if we would need to be re-baptized in order to be full communicants.**

A. The LCMS recognizes and accepts the validity of baptisms properly administered (i.e., using water in any quantity and/or mode, together with the Trinitarian invocation instituted by Christ --see Matthew 28:19) in all Christian churches. Assuming, therefore, that you have already received a proper Christian baptism, there would be no need for you or your wife to be re-baptized, although completion of some form of "instruction classes" or "membership classes" is normally required of non-Lutherans who wish to become communicant members of LCMS congregations. Please discuss this with your pastor who would be happy to discuss this issue with you, and to answer any other questions you have about membership. There is no need to be shy--pastors encounter these kinds of questions all the time.

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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*





In last month's article, I mentioned some of the reasons we have the Small Catechism and the importance of it being taught "by the head of the household." For this article, I'd like to continue this emphasis on teaching God's Word, the Catechism and the importance of constantly studying and learning from them.

Martin Luther stresses that not only are families to study the Catechism, so too are pastors. In fact, in the introduction to the Large Catechism, Luther devotes a lot of time rebuking those pastors who think they are beyond having to study and learn the Catechism.

He writes, "Many regard the catechism as a simple, trifling teaching, which they can absorb and master at one reading and then toss the book into a corner as if they are ashamed to read it again." He continues, "But this I say for myself: I am also a doctor and a preacher, just as learned and experienced as all of them who are so high and mighty. Nevertheless, each morning, and whenever else I have time, I do as a child who is being taught the catechism and I read and recite word for word the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Psalms, etc."

I'm quite amazed that he also writes this, "I must still read and study the catechism daily, and yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain a child and pupil of the catechism—and I also do so gladly." To think one of the greatest theologians who ever lived, who in many aspects was the instrument God used to restore the purity of the gospel to the world, was still a student and desired to remain so.

So, what's in it for us regularly studying the catechism? "...It is highly profitable and fruitful to read it daily and to make it the subject of meditation and conversation. In such reading, conversation, and meditation the Holy Spirit is present and bestows ever new and greater light and devotion...." And, "Nothing is so powerfully effective against the devil, the world, the flesh, and all evil thoughts as to occupy one's self with God's Word, to speak about it and meditate upon it...."

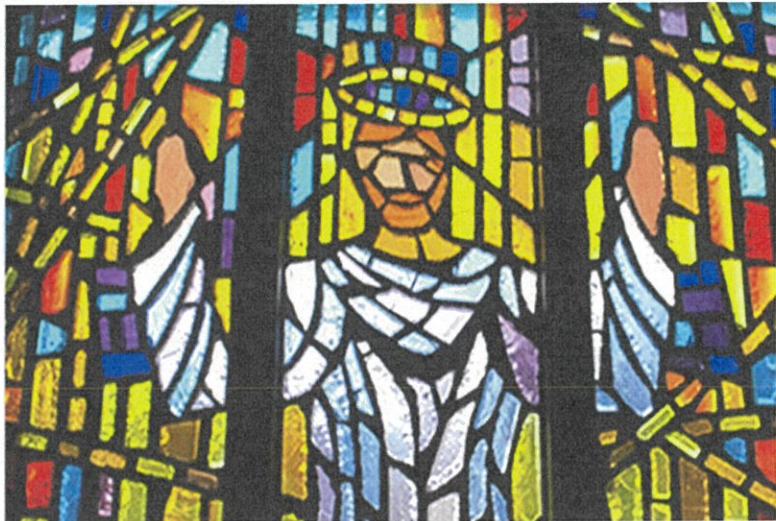
If teaching and learning was important to Luther, it's because teaching and learning is important to Christ. Matthew's Gospel is a Catechism, a teaching book on what it looks like to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Jesus himself said for the apostles to make disciples of all nations (all the Gentiles) and to do so by baptizing and **teaching** (Matthew 28:19-20). The book of Acts records regarding the activities of the early Church, "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' **teaching** and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." (Acts 2:42). I would like to encourage you to look at how often Jesus is teaching in the Gospels. He even says on the night of his arrest, "Day after day I was with you in the temple **teaching**, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled."

By contrast a stern warning is given against bad teaching. James writes, "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness." Paul includes this to his protégé Timothy, "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths." John writes in his second epistle, "Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the **teaching** of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the **teaching** has both the Father and the Son." Jesus warns his disciples to beware of the teaching of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

Finally, having good teaching taking place and learning, we equip ourselves to not only ward off the attacks of the evil one, but also to witness to Our Lord to those who are outside the Church and/or who don't have good teachings or doctrine they follow. Peter encourages us, "but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect...."

May the Lord Bless both our teaching of our children and our own learning as we grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ.





## Messiah Lutheran Church – Stewards Under The Cross September 2021

At the end of the first of his chapters on the virtue of faith in *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis provides a helpful reminder, by way of analogy, for the foundation of stewardship. He wrote:

“Every faculty you have, your power of thinking or of moving your limbs from moment to moment, is given you by God. If you devoted every moment of your whole life exclusively to His service you could not give Him anything that was not in a sense His own already. So then, when we talk of a man doing anything for God or giving anything to God, I will tell you what it is really like. It is like a small child going to its father and saying, ‘Daddy, give me sixpence to buy you a birthday present.’ Of course, the father does, and he is pleased with the child’s present. It is all very nice and proper, but only an idiot would think that the father is sixpence to the good on the transaction. When a man has made these two discoveries God can really get to work. It is after this that real life begins. (128–129).”

This is the first thing we are given to confess about stewardship, and it has to do with ownership. God owns everything, and we are simply managers – stewards – acting on His behalf. This is true not only of all that we have in this life (Deut. 8:17–18) but also all that we are in this life (1 Cor. 6:20).

The rest flows from here. Since we are stewards, or managers, of what belongs to God, entrusted to make use of it according to His will, there is an expectation of responsibility and accountability. For the Lord said, “Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more” (Luke 12:48b). And from this comes blessing and reward: “Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master” (Matt. 25:21).

We have everything we need to support this body and life from our God’s fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in us. We have everything we need for our spiritual life also from His merciful hands. On account of the sacrifice of His Son, our Lord Jesus, through the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, we have the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and everlasting salvation delivered to us with absolute certainty that it is ours – not as stewards but as sons (Gal. 4:1–7). Let us then, as His own sons, press all that He gives to us into the service of His church and to His glory.



The position is part-time, Mondays and Wednesdays, 9am—2pm.

**WE ARE  
HIRING!**



**SEARCHING FOR A  
PART-TIME TEACHER**

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For more details, or to submit your resume, contact:  
[preschooloffice@mlcatexas.org](mailto:preschooloffice@mlcatexas.org)

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PRESCHOOL**

817.431.5486

***MLCA Preschool 2021-2022***  
*So many smiles and happy  
children loving preschool!*





## COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS FROM MEETING ON AUGUST 21ST

- Council approved a continuation of our Concordia Insurance coverage for employees who elected insurance coverage at a cost to MLC of a 5.9% increase.
- Council will make an analysis of the desirability of establishing a Health Savings Program for covered employees and combining that with a larger insurance deductible.

### FROM THE PASTOR:

- Please see Messiah Messenger about changes to the Communion Schedule.
- Went to Florida for the Goodwin wedding.
- Will be off Sunday, September 26th for a "Fifth Sunday."
- Toured Community Storehouse and learned a lot.
- Many activities resuming, Bible Studies, etc. See the announcements.
- September 16th—17th will be in Fort Wayne at the Seminary for Vicarage Supervisors Conference (also presenting).
- Pastor McDonald is doing well, learning a lot and is a great help! So far so good!

### FROM THE BOARDS:

#### Education –

- Fall Sunday School kicked off on the 5th. Several families attended.

#### Elders –

- Vicar's Office is functional
- Elders completed a draft Retirement/Service Recognition Award Policy for all personnel.
- We will have more Communion Services beginning in October.

#### Evangelism –

- Swaddling Close is operational.
- New Member Dinner is being planned with September as the likely target month.
- QR Codes are being added to the bulletin and the website for Visitors.

#### Trustees –

- Trustees continue maintenance of our facilities.

#### Stewardship –

- Current Investment Portfolio value is \$211, 255.42.
- Sunday attendance averaged below 40% during July.
- Weekly giving was accomplished by something less than 40% of our members.

#### Treasurer –

- Messiah Lutheran Church finished FY2021 ahead of budget.
- The books were not closed at that time so exact figures will be available later this month.
- The treasurer is developing an annual spending plan for the church and school to insure we do not exceed revenue.

#### MLCA and Preschool –

- School has started with 87 total enrolled, 20 in Preschool and 67 in K-7.
- Preschool Director Linda Pinkston has completed a Teacher's Guide for Preschool Catechesis to help emphasize our Lutheran mission.
- The Re-Accreditation Committee has begun their work documenting our adherence to the Standards of our Accreditation Agency, National Lutheran Schools.
- School athletics have fielded soccer and volleyball teams. The upgrade to the Sports Court is almost complete. Come to chapel with us!

## Upcoming Dates to Remember

**September 16th**—Fall Pastor's Class Begins  
Thursdays, 6-8pm

**September 18th**—Men's Breakfast Bible Study  
7am [1st & 3rd Saturdays]

**September 19th**—Youth Braille Ministry 12:15pm

**September 24th**—Open Braille Workshop 6pm

**October 8th**—Youth Dance Lessons 5pm

**October 31st**—Reformation Day (Divine Service)

**November 7th**—All Saints' Day

**November 12th**—MLCA Science Fair

**November 24th**—Thanksgiving Eve Service  
Evening Prayer 7pm

**November 25th**—Thanksgiving Day [Church Office closed on the 26th]

**November 28th**—Advent Begins



MLCA began the 2021-2022 school year on August 18 with 87 students from Preschool – Seventh grade and 17 faculty and staff. Our school theme this year is John 8:12, *And Jesus spoke to them, saying "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

Our sports teams, girls volleyball and soccer, started the fall season. They are playing our home soccer games at MLCA. Come on out and support your favorite lion. Call the school office for a game schedule.

Our sports court is being renovated with new permanent basketball standards and a resurfacing/repainting for basketball and volleyball.

North Texas Giving is Thursday, September 23. We are fundraising for facility updates, such as new library shelving, classroom furniture, curriculum, and other needs. We appreciate your support!

~ Alison Smith

The MLCA Volleyball and Soccer teams (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade) started their season this week. The volleyball team won their first game on Tuesday, 9/7 against Lake Country Christian. Both Soccer and Volleyball have home games on Thursday, 9/9. Soccer will play Pioneer Tech and Volleyball will play St. Paul's Prep. Home soccer games are at Messiah Lutheran and home volleyball games are at the Alliance Sportsplex.



Early giving is now open for North Texas Giving day!  
Go to the link below or scan the QR code to support MLCA today!  
And THANK YOU for your continued support!!

<https://www.northtexasgivingday.org/Messiah-Lutheran-Classical-Academy>

## North Texas Giving Day!

# 9.23.21



Scan the QR Code to  
donate to MLCA!!

COMMUNITIES  
FOUNDATION of TEXAS

COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION of TEXAS  
**NTX  
GIVING DAY**  
powered by amazon



# Holding Hands, Not Handhelds....

Deaconess Buhler



Caring looks a whole lot different since Covid began. It has been a long year of sending letters, making home visits, delivering care packages, and loving our neighbor behind a mask or from a distance. At times, visiting members in 2020 had been impossible. When doors to our local facility began to open in early 2021, restrictions were high, and visitations were limited to essential caregivers. The world tried to tell me: Worship Services were not essential. Nursing homes shut me out and tried to tell me diaconal and pastoral care was not essential. Even our hospitals told me that interacting with members, even in hospice situations, was not an act of love. How can this world equate "prolonging this life—without the presence of God" to essential? If there ever was an oxymoron, this is one! Life does not exist without God. Before **He** created our inward parts and before **He** knit us in our mother's womb and took form, **He** knew us. (Ps139)

Finally with the help of vaccines, pathways to visiting members have begun to open! Worship Services, Communion visits, and physical touch helps loved ones feel a little more pre-covid normal. However, Covid is not gone, diseases are here to stay. But have faith--God is in control and **He** has used Covid to take away over-commitments. **He** makes us lie down in green pastures. **He** has used 2020 to grow faith in His people and to help us place people above possessions and activities. Thanks be to God that in all things **He** works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. (Rom8:28)

I have a lot to learn. I look to Scripture for courage and wisdom for today's challenges. In Ecclesiastes 1:9, Solomon declared, ***"What has been again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun."*** Diseases are not going away; sin is crouching at our door and this time its name is Covid-19.

Christ said, "Do not fear for I am with you to the very end of age." The First Commandment tells us to fear, love, and trust in God above all things. That is exactly what Queen Esther did. Yes, it took some time for her to build up enough courage, but she did. She did not let her fear of man or death overcome her fear, love, and trust in God. Esther made the pivotal choice to bravely face authority to stand up for "her people." Many of our pastors today had to make decisive decision, like Esther, to keep the doors to our churches open, to continue to trust and submit to the will of God, and to preach Law and Gospel in truth and purity. Why? What is the urgency? Because death does not wait. Eternal lives are at risk. Evangelizing in times of illness and adversity is more important than ever. "If I perish, I perish," Esther surrendered. Her proclamation resonated the words expressed by Apostle Paul in Acts 20: "I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace" ([v24](#)). Paul too surrendered to God's divine purpose by boldly confessing to the Philippians, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" ([Philippians 1:21](#)). By yielding his life to the will of God Paul considered everything in this life "a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ" ([Philippians 3:8](#)).

Solomon, Esther, and Paul attest to the courage of Christ, on the path to crucifixion as He submitted to the will of the Father.

May God grant us courage, that we may continue to hold hands in faith, to be there for one another in times of need, and to give God all the glory. Amen.

~ Hospice with Adelle ~





## 2nd ANNUAL ST. PAUL AUSTIN IS HOSTING CULTURALLY WOKE vs. BIBLICAL ENLIGHTENMENT CONFERENCE



**COST:** FREE !!!

**FOR:** young adults ages 18 - 35.

**WHEN:** Saturday, October 2, 2021.

**MAIN SPEAKER:** Pastor Bryan Wolfmueller

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** September 22, 2021.

**TO REGISTER:** Scan the QR above to sign up.

If you have further questions, email [LCMS.U.TX@gmail.com](mailto:LCMS.U.TX@gmail.com).

## Rally Day Picnic Was A Success!

Meredith Sifford

Messiah's annual Rally Day picnic was back, marking the beginning of the new Sunday School year. Lots of food and fun were had by all. Special thanks to Brian and Meredith Sifford along with everyone else who helped with food, games, setup and cleanup!



*Let's have a great 2021-2022 year of  
Sunday School at Messiah!*