



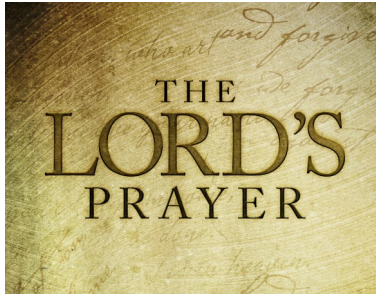
MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH - KELLER, TEXAS
Messiah Messenger

F.A.Q.'s

Rev. Thomas Chryst

F.A.Q.'S

(Frequently Asked Questions)



Q: Since it is not found in Scripture, what is the origin of the conclusion to the Lord's Prayer, "For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever, Amen"?

A: From the most ancient manuscripts of the New Testament it is clear that the conclusion to the Lord's Prayer was not included. But somewhere early on Christians began to tack the phrase to the end, much in the same way, perhaps, as we

conclude many of our prayers "through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever."

When the King James Bible was translated in the early 17th century, many of the most ancient manuscripts had not yet been discovered. The ones they had were somewhat older and some of them included this conclusion. Since the mid 1800s there has been a considerable amount of scholarship which has helped us to better understand what the original version of the New Testament was. For this reason, newer Bible translations have not included the conclusion, though some of them have indicated it in a footnote.

Please don't become disconcerted to hear talk of different manuscripts and versions, etc. In all the cases where there are differences in the ancient manuscripts, the differences are slight. That doesn't mean they're not important, because they do help us gain a better understanding of the meaning of the text. But in no case do they present conflicting doctrinal positions.



Q. As a recent convert to Lutheranism, I am to be baptized this Sunday. In my adult instruction class with the pastor at the local LCMS church, I asked why the baptismal shell was used as a symbol in the church. The pastor said that he did not know and challenged me to find out. After looking across the internet, I have found that there is a legend that John the Baptist used a shell to baptize the Lord. Also, I discovered that certain large conch shells have been

used as baptismal fonts in some cultures. Considering these possible explanations, is there a specific, known connection to an origin of the baptismal shell and its connection to the Christian faith? That would seem to be the case for it to be such a widespread symbol.

A. In the various sources at my disposal, I was not able to discover any mentioning of the origins of using a shell at baptism. This is a good question.

Although the origins of this practice might help us understand its meaning better, the meaning seems fairly straight forward. Shells are associated with water, and water is used in baptism. Hence, shells have come to symbolize baptism, and even used in pouring water at baptism. Sometimes shells are depicted artistically with three drops beneath them, symbolizing the three persons of the Holy Trinity, who are there at holy baptism. The legend about John the Baptizer sounds like a legend, and is certainly not attested to in Scripture. Our Lord's richest blessings be with you on your upcoming baptismal day!

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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*

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



In my brief time as a student at Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne, and now as a Vicar/Pastor, I've had great opportunities to see a wide range of congregations and how they practice Holy Communion.

And while there's a huge variety of proper distribution and reception of the elements, there's also a wide range of practice regarding who is admitted to the Lord's Supper. Usually, there's a brief statement, a paragraph or so in the bulletin, which explains that congregation's practice. Some are better than others.

And Messiah's Communion Statement is very solid. If you haven't read it recently, I would encourage you to do so. And if you have an opportunity, compare, and contrast it with some other congregations. I think you'll be surprised!

One of the many important points our statement makes is this: "Participation at the altar is also a testimony of unity of faith with all others who partake (1 Cor. 10:17). Since unity at the altar presupposes unity in doctrine and confession (Acts 2:42), we kindly request that only those **who are in confessional fellowship** with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod participate. This includes active members in good standing of all sister Missouri-Synod congregations."

1 Corinthians 10:17 says: *"Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."*

Christianity is both an individual and a corporate confession (religion). It's a duality. In the Lord's Supper, the Body and Blood of Christ are received individually—for the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of faith. Yet, at the same time, we commune as **ONE** body, partaking of **ONE** bread (Christ). While we do our very best to correctly practice Closed Communion for those who are visitors to Messiah, we would do well to remember that Closed Communion works the "other way" too. This happens when we as members of an LCMS congregation are visitors to a congregation whose confession is different than our own. In those situations, we would do well to practice Closed Communion ourselves and not partake of the Lord's Supper during that congregation's service.



Not going to the Lord's Table with close family or dear friends when we do visit a congregation with different Communion practices than ours can become extremely awkward and uncomfortable for all involved. And that's especially true with the more liberal practices of an "Open Table" congregation for example. It's easy to offend others who don't practice Closed Communion. However, we remember we remain faithful to Christ first and foremost and to the mandating Words of His Supper, as well as everything else He commands and teaches us.

For we remember it's the LORD'S supper, not our supper. And while we certainly don't deny other Christians of different denominations can have saving faith, we do deny that they hold the same unity in doctrine and confession that we do. And so, we don't want to give any wrong ideas to others. For even if one doesn't say anything about differences one has in their beliefs when one might visit a church of another denomination, one does testify to others there about their having complete unity in doctrine and beliefs with them when one does go forward to the Lord's Table.



'TIS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE

"In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' " (Acts 20:35)

And indeed, it is. Does this not strike a chord that resonates in us all? Which of us can't recall the look of surprise and thanks for the Christmas gifts that we labored to give to those whom we love? And the joy written on their face when that gift is received with thanksgiving means more than all the gifts we have received. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Our Lord knew this because He practiced it. He gave of Himself – sparing not even His life in death – in order to give us back to our Father in heaven. He knew that in giving you get more because joy is multiplied in giving. The one who receives and the one who gives both rejoice in what is given and received. And, what is more, the one who receives only wants to give back to the one who gave so generously in thanksgiving.

So it is with our tithes and offerings in church. We want to give because we have received from God all that we are and all that we have. Our giving does not originate in what we must do to earn God's favor. We have God's favor because of His gift of His Son, given through Word and Sacrament. Thus, we are made free from the compulsion of giving so that our tithes and offering are freely given in thanksgiving for what God has so generously given to us. Why then does the church struggle to make budgets? Why does the church always seem stretched so thin when it is the place where God continually gives us His forgiveness of sins? Why does the church struggle when God, out of love for us, generously pours out His grace and mercy?

It is because we are sinners. Our fallen nature makes us selfish and miserly. It leads us to believe that we can have our cake and eat it, too. Because of sin, we want God's grace and mercy; we want His blessings of body and soul. But we don't want to share it with those around us. We want to remain comfortable in our own self-contained, neat, and tidy lives – without the headaches of loving those around us by helping them in their time of need.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' " Remember that God has placed you in a church, not only to receive His grace and mercy, but to press His eternal and temporal blessings into service to your neighbor.

Your tithes and offerings ensure that those around you have a pastor to preach the life-saving and life-giving Word of God. They ensure that the lights, heat, and air-conditioning are working. They ensure there is water for Holy Baptism as well as bread and wine for Holy Communion. They even ensure that your pastor has food and clothing and presents for his own family. The gifts of God are immeasurable. They multiply and redound to everyone's good as the fish and loaves in the feeding of the five thousand. So, remember the words of the Lord Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." And remember the joy that attended the gifts you gave at Christmas. This same joy attends your gifts to the church.

Thank you to all who helped make the Sunday School Christmas Program a great success!



Messiah News and Other Events

Interested in starting a LIFE TEAM at Messiah?

What are some of the tasks involved in leading a "Life Team" ?

- Organizing our Baby Bottle Fundraiser;
- Announcing opportunities to join area Life Team Events, 40 Day for life, and Marches'
- Announcing Y4Life gatherings for our high school and college students and helping our youth find pro-life opportunities in their college area;
- Placing articles in our monthly newsletter: Messiah Messenger or making flyers for our walls/cubbies; informing the congregation about zoom events like the one below that help educate people on all life affirming opportunities for Lutherans.

Contact Deaconess Buhler at deaconess.buhler@gmail.com for more information regarding the ins and out of leading this important team for our church and our youth.



The Quarterly Voters' Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, **January 30th** immediately following the second service. This meeting will include the **election of officers for the 2022 year**. If you have questions concerning your member status or are interested in serving on a board, please contact Bill Brandt at wpbd77@yahoo.com.



Messiah is in search of a VBS Director for this 2022 summer's program. If you are interested or would like to know more, please contact Pastor Chryst at pastor.chryst@messiahkeller.org, Matthew Latham at eagleorange7@yahoo.com or Vera Sweet at vsweet328@gmail.com.



MLCA BLACK AND GOLD MASQUERADE AUCTION!! Mark your calendars for Friday, April 29th for the Messiah Lutheran Classical Academy's Spring Auction. In preparation for this event, the MLCA Auction Committee would like to ask for the congregation's assistance in obtaining auction items. The committee has put together a list of potential items that they'd love to see donated. To see the entire list [click here!](#) Thank you in advance for your continued support!

Messiah's Upcoming Dates to Remember

January 14 - Youth Dance Lessons—Fellowship Hall

January 15 - Men's Breakfast Bible Study at Rosa's Café

January 15 - USCF Chess Tournament hosted by MLCA

January 20 - (and Jan 27th) GriefShare Support Group

January 28 - Open Braille Workshop

January 30 - MLCA Students sing at Messiah 10:45 Service

January 30 - Voter's Meeting

January 29 - Faith Plano Free Conference - Christians in a Woke World

February 5th - (and 15th) Men's Breakfast Bible Study

February 6 - Board and Officer Installment

February 11th - Youth Dance Lessons—Fellowship Hall

February 25 - Y 4 Life Summit Conference

April 29 - MLCA "Black and Gold" Auction

May 1 - Youth Confirmation, 10:45 Service

Contact the MLCA Office for re-enrollment
through January 31st at Mlcatexas.org.



It's Time!

2022-2023

RE-ENROLLMENT

Priority re-enrollment is open January 5th – January 31st.

MLCA is hosting an Open House on January 19th!
All are welcome! Tell a friend!

<p><i>You're Invited to the...</i></p> <h2>MLCA OPEN HOUSE</h2> <p>COME AND TOUR OUR SCHOOL!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CHRIST-CENTERED• SMALL CLASSES• CLASSICAL EDUCATION		
<p>DATE: JANUARY 19, 2022</p> <p>LOCATION: MLCA SCHOOL 1308 WHITLEY RD., KELLER</p> <p>TIME: 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM</p>		

A big THANK YOU to all the people involved with helping to make Angel Tree a success this year. We served about 85 children from around 45 different families. What a blessing you all are! As a reminder of how God can work faith in the heart of prisoners through prison ministries, I have included a powerful story below (with permission) to demonstrate God's patience and grace.

Inmate Serving Life Sentence for Murder Transfigured by the Child he had a Hand in Aborting in his Youth

By Kevin Burke

Paschal Mystery is a term that describes the redemptive work of Christ, especially the events of the Last Supper, the suffering and death of Jesus, reaching their climax on Easter Sunday. That same paschal mystery unfolds in the life of every believing Christian. Here is the amazing story of how this mystery was manifest in the life of a prisoner at a Florida maximum security prison. Earl J. Hinson:

"I was age 17, sitting at home on a weekday afternoon when the phone call came. It was Jessica...she told me she was pregnant. Instantly the thought that abortion is wrong flashed through my mind. I told her we could take care of the child. She told me that she did not want to carry the child and that she needed \$400 to have the abortion. I was going to argue further, but her boyfriend then got on the phone. It is difficult to put into words the rage I felt flare up when I heard her new boyfriend on the phone. It felt like an ambush. I told them that I did not have the money. As they continued to push, I pushed back and told them that it was not my problem but theirs.

After the abortion, anger became my constant companion. I tried to continue with schooling, but it did not take long for me to lose track. Violent thoughts lived in my mind day and night. I took unnecessary risks, such as racing, lashing out and fighting others. Danger and risk became synonymous with a good time. Adrenaline and caffeine became my bread and water. Before long, I was one person during the day with certain acquaintances and friends, and a completely different person at night and with different acquaintances. My academic plans in college — to complete a pre-med program and obtain a degree in psychiatry — finally collapsed under the stress of my double life. Long-term goals became obsolete, and I lived my life day-to-day. Relationships began to suffer. One of the men I spent time with on my ludicrous escapades came to me with another wild idea. The plan was criminal in the extreme. Finally, the fruit of passive-participation in the killing of my child ripened within me. I participated in the murder and robbery of a man, the wounding of another, and the near death of a young woman at the scene of the crime. It did not take long for the police to arrest me. While sitting in the county jail a grace-filled moment occurred. I realized that I had hit rock bottom. But remorse for my crimes and sins did not flood me, though I did recognize just how insane my behavior was. When sent to prison, I continued to look at the bizarre split in my life and the chasm that existed in my lifestyles. This, and God's grace, brought me back to His Church, and I began to recognize how my sinful actions created this split personality. In walking with Jesus through my memories and past actions, I began to understand remorse, guilt, and healthy shame. However, no matter how much I prayed, no matter how much I fasted, and no matter how much I sacrificed, I suffered the demons of self-doubt and pride. Finally, the Holy Spirit brought the phone call from Jessica to mind. I became overwhelmed with the sense that this wound was the source of my suffering and struggle. At weekly services the Catholic chaplain polled 100 inmates to see how many men had gone through an abortion experience. A surprise came when I learned that more than 90% of the men around me were involved in an abortion decision. Later, the chaplain announced that the Rachel's Vineyard.org program was coming to our institution to help heal the wound of the abortion.

The seminar answered my deepest prayers. It showed me how my self-image and core beliefs were warped by the abortion, my self-justifications, and my denial. I came to recognize that the need to overachieve, my obsession with detail, my propensity for anger and violence, and even my hunger for adrenaline excitement were rooted in my corrupted idea of masculinity. My consent in the abortion of my daughter was a violation of my natural purpose to protect and provide for my offspring. This denial was forcing me to overcompensate for the damage I caused to my natural masculine identity. The problem was that this denial also meant that I was denying everything that made me human. It was a suffering joy when I came to know my heavenly daughter, Angela Grace. I had been unaware of just how callous and unfeeling I was, but through the healing received by God in the Rachel's Vineyard seminar, it allowed me to feel. I came to know myself, my wrongs, and experience a remorse that is difficult to express adequately — painful to feel yet liberating to know. Rachel's Vineyard is the grace that God ordained for my healing, and the healing of so many others. Though I justly remain in prison for my crimes, Rachel's Vineyard has been the vessel of grace by which God has made me free. It is in this freedom that I will now be ...Silent No More." (www.silentNoMoreAwareness.org)

A devout grandmother opens the door to grace: One of the victim's grandmothers played an important role in Hinson's conversion and healing. "One of the greatest examples of faith that Hinson ever witnessed came from a member of his victim's family — the grandmother of Eduardo Natal, who Hinson killed. During the trial, prosecutors approached Natal's family to tell them they wished to seek the death penalty in Hinson's case. But Natal's grandmother, the family matriarch, said the family was Catholic and didn't believe in capital punishment. As a result, Hinson received life in prison without parole instead of death. It was a very tangible expression of faith on her part, and it really rocked my world," Hinson said. "In a sense of desperation, I was getting back into my faith and then all the sudden, all that matters is living my life like Hinson has led many retreats for fellow inmates who lost a child, or children to abortion."

Dear Friends in Christ.....Wow, there are so many opportunities for College/Young Adults to get together. Please **SIGN UP TODAY!** Hope to see you soon. Have a blessed 2022!
~Vera Sweet~

"LIFE MAGNIFIED" CONFERENCE
 January 20-23, 2022

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!"

Pastor Wolfmueller at St. Paul Austin is hosting a weekend of activities in alliance with the Texas Rally for Life. This event is for all ages and commemorates the Supreme Court's tragic Roe v. Wade decision that imposed legal abortion on Texas and the entire nation. Includes Pro Life March to the Texas capitol.

SOCIAL EVENTS: for college/young adults will take place at the conclusion of Friday and Saturday conference events. **ACTIVITIES ARE FREE:** Except Saturday dinner. Please register TODAY so we can better prepare. You can always cancel your reservation should your plans change. A detailed schedule will be mailed to you after registration. **HOUSING:** Please indicate if you are interested in sharing a hotel room. **QUESTIONS:** Email LCMS.U.TX@gmail.com, or contact John or Vera Sweet with questions at vsweet328@gmail.com. **CHECK OUT:** Our Facebook page for more information: <https://tinyurl.com/p39n6hd4>.

CONFERENCE LOCATION: St. Paul Lutheran Church, LCMS, 3501 Red River Street, Austin, TX 78705. Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100067647291062>

"CHRISTIANS IN A WOKE WORLD! A CALL TO COURAGE, CONFESSION AND LOVE."
A North Texas Conference

Saturday, January 29, 2022
 8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
 Faith Lutheran Church in Plano
 Speaker: Rev. Paul Dare

What is social justice, privilege and other dangerous ideologies? What does it mean to be a racist? Why do some people seem to want to be victims? We will answer these and other questions in light of Scripture. The solution is the very Gospel. We will enter Scripture and hear God's call to courage, confession and love that finds its home in Jesus Christ and Him crucified for all people.

REGISTER HERE - <https://faithplano.org/north-texas-free-conference/> For questions contact Faith Lutheran Church at 972-423-7447. Church address is 1701 East Park Blvd, Plano, Texas 75074. 972-

Y4 LIFE SUMMIT CONFERENCE AT CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, TEXAS
February 25-27

Join college and high school students from across the nation to learn about life issues and discover how to respond to them from a Gospel-motivated perspective. This year's Y4Life Summit will be filled with educational sessions and hands-on opportunities to support life. Check out our Y4Life Summit flier for event plans and lodging details! **The conference is FREE, but space is limited.**

Contact michelle@y4life.org for information on how to join other 4Life youth at Concordia University Texas from February 25-27 or download the Y4Life Summit flier [HERE](#).