



MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH - KELLER, TEXAS

Messiah Messenger

EVERY DECISION IS A STEWARDSHIP DECISION

by Pastor Glenn Huebel

We have come to another crossroads in the ministry of this congregation as we face significant financial challenges and difficult options to consider. The Voters Assembly has taken a wise and cautious approach by requesting an extension and expansion of our line of credit with the Church Extension Fund, while withholding authority to borrow any new money without approval of a specific and clear plan of action, with triggers and milestones, to assure financial responsibility and accountability. This allows us to keep all options open without committing us to any particular direction in ministry. Many more decisions and commitments will have to be made in the near future. I thank God that

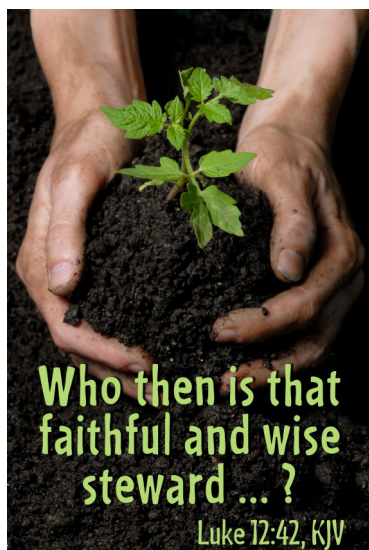
we have gifted lay leaders to help us negotiate these rapids. The first response we must all make is to be earnestly praying for God's wisdom and direction for these leaders. This article is not going to offer any particular solutions to the challenges we face, but to remind us all of general principles that must govern all of our decisions in ministry and life. As I have said previously in spoken and written word, "Every decision is a stewardship decision." We dare not forget that now.

Many if not most people think that stewardship is primarily about money. That is not true. Individually we are stewards of our whole life, not just our bank accounts. Collectively, we are stewards of spiritual blessings infinitely more valuable than money, especially the means of grace and the faith they create and nurture. We are all stewards of souls entrusted to our care, including our own souls. If we get our priorities mixed up we will not be good, faithful, and wise stewards because our decisions will be directed to achieve wrong or lesser ends than those which are God-pleasing. People who have different priorities will likely make different

decisions even if they face the very same circumstances. That's why investment counselors usually begin by asking the client what he wants to achieve and makes a plan accordingly. There is not one plan for everyone because we all have different goals and priorities even in regard to money. Depending on priorities and circumstances people are willing to sacrifice different things, take more risks or less risks, etc. And this is even within the narrow realm of stewarding money.

Our Christian stewardship is much wider than money and, as I have said, money is not even near the most valuable gift we are entrusted to manage. This is true even in our personal lives. Are there times when we, as Christians, may make what the world considers a "foolish" financial decision because of our priorities? Certainly there are! We may refuse the opportunity to take a lucrative job in another city because it would put our children into a context that might jeopardize their spiritual welfare. Would the extra money be worth the spiritual risk? Some Christians would say no. We may even lose our jobs

(Continued on page 2)



Inside this issue:

February Bible Readings	2
Messiah Evangelist	3
This Month in History	4
MLCA News	4

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

Every Decision, cont.

because we do not wish to sacrifice our integrity. Is that a foolish decision? Even if we are dead set against borrowing money what Christian would deny a necessary operation for a loved one if he had to borrow money to have it done? (Paying the hospital back over time is still “borrowing.”) Is such a Christian a bad or weak steward? Of course not! He is making decisions based on proper priorities. Every Christian knows that the money will mean nothing on the day of Judgment, but other things will mean everything. If we make every decision to increase or protect money, we may not be good stewards at all, even if we give a tithe or more to the church. *Every* decision is a stewardship decision.

Our stewardship as a congregation is also much wider than money. The Church’s commission is not like that of a business. The purpose of a business is to make money, so everything tends to be geared toward that priority. I don’t object to that at all. It is what makes our capitalist system work, and it has a way of producing prosperity for all. I don’t think making money is evil, but that is not what the church is commissioned to do, and it is not

how the church measures success. Though it is well to apply business principles to the church operation, they must not be allowed to govern the operation because the priorities are different. For example, we Lutherans are not anti-intellectual. We know that human intelligence and wisdom are gifts of God, but we do not allow reason to RULE over Scripture. Reason is always kept in a ministerial rather than a magisterial position in the Church. Some people call us foolish for this but we know the spiritual consequences of allowing reason to rule over the Word. The work of the church is a spiritual work to bring about spiritual results. The fruit of the Kingdom that God seeks and expects is not money. The Church does all things to proclaim the Gospel so that souls are gathered into the barn of Kingdom, and lives are transformed to proclaim His praises. This is treasure that moths cannot eat, nor rust corrupt. This is treasure that lasts forever. This is the priority to which everything is directed, and to which all other lesser gifts are supporting. Those who wish to put the church strictly under the business model may consider the church foolish for making certain decisions that properly reflect her God-given

priorities. Every decision is a stewardship decision.

Now there are two extremes that we must avoid. There are some who think faith is a license to be fiscally irresponsible. I have occasionally been accused of having no faith because I insisted on reasonable projections and balanced budgets that may cause pain. It hurts for a pastor to be accused of having no faith, but I know that faith is not committing God to do what we want, but clinging to what He has promised us. We cannot be fiscally irresponsible in the name of faith. There are others who give little attention to the true work of the ministry and producing the fruits pleasing to God, but come unglued if money is risked or lost or jeopardized in the process. Some would be perfectly satisfied if, when the Lord comes, we have no debt but have produced no spiritual fruits either. Being fiscally “safe” is not necessarily pleasing to God (Matthew 25:24-28). Somewhere in the middle our discussions and debates must take place. May God’s Spirit rest upon us and make us good and faithful stewards.

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor Huebel



February Bible Readings

01: Zech. 11:4-17 2 Tim. 4:1-18	07: Job 4:1-21 John 2:1-12	13: Job 9:1-35 John 4:46-54	19: Job 14:1-22 John 6:41-59	25: Job 20:1-23, 29 John 8:21-38
02: Zech 12:1-13:9 Titus 1:1-2:6	08: Job 5:1-27 John 2:13-25	14: Job 10:1-22 John 5:1-18	20: Job 15:1-23, 30-35 John 60-71	26: Job 21:1-21 <i>Job 21:22-30:15</i>
03: Zech. 14:1-21 Titus 2:7-3:15	09: Job 6:1-13 John 3:1-21	15: Job 11:1-20 John 5:19-29	21: Job 16:1-22 John 7:1-13	John 8:39-59
04: Job 1:1-22 John 1:1-18	10: Job 6:14-30 John 3:22-4:6	16: Job 12:1-6, 12-25 John 5:30-47	22: Job 17:1-16 John 7:14-31	27: Job 30:16-31 John 9:1-23
05: Job 2:1-3:10 John 1:19-34	11: Job 7:1-21 John 4:7-26	17: Job 13:1-12 John 6:1-21	23: Job 18:1-21 John 7:32-53	28: Job 31:1-12, 33-40 John 9:24-41
06: Job 3:11-26 John 1:35-51	12: Job 8:1-22 John 4:27-45	18: Job 13:13-28 John 6:22-40	24: Job 19:1-12, 21-27 John 8:1-20	



The Messiah Evangelist: *The Transfiguration*

Peter, James, and John were allowed a glimpse of heaven on the Mount of Transfiguration. Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem to face His deepest humiliation yet it was our greatest gift – His death on the cross. But before that significant hour came, God revealed to these disciples that Jesus remains His beloved Son. Christ was completing His visionary work, which He performed to the full satisfaction of God. The Father was delighted with His Son.

As Jesus, now the High Priest, entered the final stage of His prophetic mission, He prepares to offer himself as the Lamb of God, Moses and Elijah discuss His great task ahead – the redemption of a sinful world. All mankind has broken the Law given to Moses and has not heeded the call to repentance urged by Elijah. Moses' Law and Elijah's denunciation of sin could not save the world from its ruin.

But just as the three disciples exalt at the glory they behold, a cloud overshadows them. This significant event captivates our thoughts in that sudden change Jesus remains and continues as Peter, James, and John return to a disappointing, and frustrated life. We receive the same benefit today, in our frenzied lives, Jesus remains the same yesterday, today, and forever. The transfiguration demonstrates that.

And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his

clothes became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear." And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead." And the disciples asked him, "Then why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?" He answered, "Elijah does come, and he will restore all things. But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man will certainly suffer at their hands." Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist. (Matt 17:1-13)

While Jesus had been on the mountain with the three disciples overnight, a multitude had gathered at the foot of the mountain, where the other disciples were awaiting. The multitude welcomed Him with joy but His attention was immediately directed to a man who charged toward Him with a desperate plea. He confesses Jesus as the Lord; he earnestly begs mercy at His hands, knows he is not worthy to

receive the gift. He pleads for healing of his son's illness, a form of lunacy or epilepsy, which caused the boy to cast himself into the fire or water. Jesus did instantly.

From this heavenly majesty of the glorious transfiguration, Jesus and His disciples descend into the abject misery of life's bitterness and see a child terribly afflicted. We see contrasts in our life continually. Joy and sorrow, laughter and tears, sun and rain, Christ's death and our salvation. God gives the elements at the appointed time to provide what we need. If we only had joy we would forget God, but if we had only sorrow we would languish in despair. Life holds both, and God's Mercy keeps us balanced and steadfast in faith.

Your God always has time for you and is so generous. He richly blesses us every day!

Dearest Lord, Your continuing love and kindness, allows us to see through life's hardships, sorrows and tears with Your heart of compassion. Bring us nearer to You and Calvary's cross whenever we doubt Your mercies and love. Have mercy upon our rebellious thoughts, and make the Holy Spirit grow within us for greater faith and hope, through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

Paul Kohlmeier
Board of Evangelism



Messiah Lutheran Church & School

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

1308 Whitley Rd. Keller, TX 76248

Church Office: (817) 431-2345

Early Childhood Center: (817) 431-6139

Classical Academy (K—8): (817) 431-5486

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

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

Rev. Glenn Huebel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Dennis Kitzmann, Assistant Pastor

Mrs. Natalie Anderson, Principal, Classical Academy

Mrs. Heather Heitmann, Director, Early Childhood Center

Mrs. Vicki Main, Music Director

Mrs. Kathy Blaschke, Financial Director

www.messiahkeller.org

1981 ✠ 30th ✠ 2011

February Events in our History

1981: Keller Lutheran Mission adopted the name *Messiah Lutheran Church* with a final vote on Feb. 8, 1981. Other finalist names: Grace and Christ.

1983: We broke ground for our sanctuary building on the very cold and windy afternoon of Feb. 6, 1983.

1996: Enrollment opened up for our Mother's Day Out, a new kindergarten and proposed 1st/2nd grade class. The Kindergarten opened that fall, the 1st/2nd grade class had to wait a few more years.

2003: Ray and Vicki Main were married during the late service on Sunday, February 16. Vicki still played the organ for much of the service.

2004: February had 5 Sundays in 2004! To celebrate, a "Once-Every-28 Yr—Potluck was held. This was truly a potluck: participants brought any kind of stew ingredient they wanted (meat was brought pre-cooked) and everything was dumped together into two huge roasters and slowly cooked through the church services. The resulting stews were wonderfully tasty!

2005: All ground-breakings seem to fall in February. On Feb. 6, 2005, we broke ground for our Education (Academy) wing.

2006: A special, surprise, service and dinner were held on Feb. 19 to celebrate Pastor Huebel's 25th Ordination anniversary. Rev. Daniel Preus was the guest speaker. Pastor's actual anniversary was July 6, 2005—which was one of the reasons the surprise was able to be maintained!



For the Lord is good; His steadfast love endures forever and His faithfulness to all generations. --Psalm 100:5

MLCA News

Our 5th and 6th grade attended the **27th Annual DFW Lutheran Schools Math Competition** on January 14th at Prince of Peace Lutheran School in Carrollton. This was our first time attending the event and our students did very well! There were 8 schools competing in 5 competitions. Each competition was categorized by grade level (5th - 8th grade). Ribbons were awarded to individual students by grade level in 3 competitions, and team awards by grade level for 2 competitions. Our very own 5th grade student, Sarah Tonniges, received a 1st place ribbon in the "Real World" competition and a 3rd place ribbon in "The Number Zone"

competition. Congratulations to both teams for representing Messiah with good sportsmanship and great team work! Our 5th grade team members: Austin Howell, Joseph Schinnerer, Taylor Shreve, and Sarah Tonniges. 6th Graders: Kyle Anderson, Matthew Blaschke, Brian Lang, and Michael Modisett.



The **MLCA Handbell Trio** was warmly welcomed at Holy Shepherd, Haslett on Sunday, January 30. Our trio members, Miranda Gardner, Lindsey Sellers, and Lydia Schinnerer rang two songs during the service along with a Call to Worship. Mrs. Rider rang with them on the Call to Worship. Thank you members of Holy Shepherd for your kindness and hospitality!



MLCA and ECC are NOW ENROLLING: 2 Yrs. - 8th Grade