

2018
ANNUAL REPORT

MESSIAH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



59TH ANNUAL
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2019
11:30 PM

2018 Annual Report

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58th Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda

Opening Prayer
January 22, 2017 Annual Meeting Minutes
Pastor's Report
Music Ministry Report
Congregation President's Report
Foundation for the Future Update
Ministry Reports (written)
HUB Elections
Endowment Fund Election
2017 Financials/2018 Budget
Lutheran Church of Concord Update
New Business
Closing Prayer

Our Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Mission Statement

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church
Called into community, gifted to serve;
Glorifying God through love in action.

Vision Statement

As we build up one another and Christ's church, we at Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church worship the living God in word and sacrament. Centered in Christ, we joyfully stand shoulder to shoulder in praise, worship and service, listening for God, giving and receiving love, encouragement and forgiveness. We extend that love to the community to create a more just society, recognizing that all people are beloved children of God.

As we build up one another and Christ's church, we care for one another, offering comfort, peace and friendship in the name of Jesus. At the same time we care for all of creation as stewards of our time, talents and resources to comfort and serve others as Jesus has called us to do.

As we build up one another and Christ's church, we nurture all people as children of God. We study and learn together as disciples of Christ. We raise up leaders from among us to draw yet others to the love of Jesus.

As we build up one another and Christ's church, we passionately share the good news of God's love and salvation by reaching out to others far and wide in welcome, recognizing them as friends we have not yet met. We confidently follow God into a future filled with hope, trusting the Holy Spirit and giving glory to God.

Core Values

We at Messiah value:

- **Vibrant relationships with God** – evident in our worship, prayer, and daily lives
- **Serving others together** – using our gifts to meet others' needs
- **Generosity** – as faithful stewards of our God-given time, talents and resources
- **Growing in faith** – through personal and community prayer, study, and discipleship
- **Community and fellowship** – living as brothers and sisters in Christ, encouraging and holding each other accountable
- **Compassion and kindness** – loving and building up one another
- **Inclusion and affirmation** –welcoming everyone with God's love
- **Spirit-led momentum** – continuously discerning and growing as a community
- **Trust** – in God and each other, to share our joys and struggles
- **Forgiveness and reconciliation** – embracing God's forgiveness and extending it to others

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church
2018 Annual Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2018

Meeting called to order by President Julie Gerstenberger @ 12:15

Opening Prayer - Pastor Aileen

2017 Annual Meeting Minutes presented for approval - Motioned, Seconded & Approved
Sept. 11, 2016 Congregational Meeting Minutes were presented for approval- Motioned, Seconded & Approved

Pastor's Report - Pastor Aileen Robbins thanked the congregation, those who have served on the HUB and those people who have completed their final terms on the HUB (Julie, Joanne and John.) A big THANK YOU to all for your engagement and leadership!

Music Ministry Report - Dr. Willie La Favor - a big Thank You to all who participate in our many music ministries; he also invited everyone to join a choir to try it out.

Congregation President's Report – Julie Gerstenberger reviewed: How are we doing on our goals? We have made significant progress on our 2018 Strategic Goals, exceeding our goals in most areas by the end of 2017. Continued focus on increasing congregational engagement and being church for our community will ensure we are growing as disciples and witnesses to God's love.

We will increasingly become "Church for the Community as we:

- 1. Promote languages and behaviors that acknowledge and celebrate that all are beloved and gifted children of God, brothers and sisters in Christ.*
- 2. Increase our engagement with the community through the quantity of our interactions and the quality of our relationships.*
 - a. Grow the % of Messiah members engaged in ministries with intentional community interaction from 7% to 20%. Actual 2017 year-end was 30%!*
 - b. Double the number of community members engaged with Messiah ministries with intentional community interaction. Actual 2017 year-end was 2.5X!*
- 3. Equip people through study, worship and training to share our unique faith stories such that God's love is proclaimed.*
- 4. Continue to increase congregational engagement in our ministries of worship, learning, service and outreach from 50% to 65% of members. Actual 2017 year-end was 55%.*

Ministry Reports are in the written Annual Report distributed to the congregation; no verbal reports were needed.

HUB Election – The Nominations Committee and HUB have nominated the following candidates who have agreed to stand for election to the HUB for a two year term:

- Rod Speer - Property - second term
- Jeff Gerstenberger - President - first term
- Mark Sutliff - Service - first term
- Jeff Ulreich - At Large - first term
- Judy Webster - Reach Out - first term

The slate of candidates was elected unanimously by written ballot with a confirmed quorum in attendance (60 confirmed members present and voting, 37 required for a quorum).

Endowment Fund Board election - Ladd Dromgold nominated Wayne Reabold for membership on the Endowment Fund Board. Nomination was seconded, and approved. Wayne was elected to become a member of the Endowment Fund Board.

Foundation for the Future Update - Jeff Gerstenberger

Our Campaign goal was \$450,000.

Status to date:

- Pledges - \$411,900
- As able giving - \$2,148
- Total \$414,048
- Receipts to date - \$227,090
- \$35,952 is still needed to reach our goal.
 - Additional pledges welcomed
 - As able giving still needed
 - All gifts are important to the success of the campaign
- Thank You to All!
- Proposed Motion: "To approve purchase and installation of an Outside Air Unit to meet town code requirements using up to \$62,000 from capital campaign funds." Motion seconded and passed.

2017 Financials/2018 Budget Highlights – Julie Gerstenberger

- A successful "Foundation for the Future Campaign" with good progress on capital improvements.
- Energy usage below 3 year average
- Lily Grant received for Pastor Aileen's Sabbatical
- \$50,128 given to Benevolence
- 2017 Operating Income was lower than anticipated; several factors may have contributed: Capital Campaign, sabbatical, changes in worship times, and reduced building use income.
- To present a balanced budget, we are presenting a lower budget of \$278,000 this year to reflect lower anticipated income.
- A Financial Forum was held January 21 to review the proposed budget in detail

- Tom Johnson responded to a question about use of the Memorial Fund for some expenses (e.g. capital improvements). When money is given by a person designated for a specific purpose, we need to honor that. The restriction is a NYS Law.

- Motioned and Seconded and passed that we approve the 2018 budget of \$278,000

Lutheran Church of Concord Update - Sandy Volta - President of Concord presented the following report:

Concord has had a rich history and this week we celebrate our 108th birthday, we are now facing a difficult period as we have experienced aging membership and declining attendance. The leadership of Concord has looked into options for the future, and has worked over the past several months to inform the congregation of the need to make the hard decisions ahead of us as we realize that the doors of Concord need to close.

We have struggled through a grieving process as we face that reality. We have been blessed by the option presented to us by Pastor Aileen to explore finding a new church home at Messiah. We are so appreciative of the willingness of the people of Messiah to make changes in their worship times so that our members could get to know Pastor Aileen and many of the members here, you have embraced us and made us feel welcome. We recognize the sacrifices being made here to create a path for us and we sincerely thank you for all that you are doing to walk with us and comfort us.

While we know closing Concord must happen it has been difficult for people to accept. To help our members prepare for the next steps, we hold monthly Concord Updates to inform them of the steps ahead of us, of the discussions at our Council meetings and the efforts of our Ad Hoc Committee and your Accompaniment Team. We have shared the ELCA booklet on Holy Closure which discusses not only the steps but the emotions to be dealt with. We have held small group discussions using the same questions that were discussed at your meetings. The many joint services and committee meetings provide us with excellent opportunities to become familiar with you and be inspired by the dedicated and faithful people of Messiah. Concord held our Annual Congregation Meeting last week and part of the information shared with our members was the average attendance for last year, which was approximately 31 Concord members plus Messiah members who attend our 9:00 service, which is down from 38 in 2015 and 2016. We now believe the members are ready for the decisions that need to be made.

A Special Congregation Meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2018 when the members of The Lutheran Church of Concord will vote on starting the process of dissolution and listing our church property for sale. There is much work ahead of us and we look forward to working with the leadership here to develop the specifics.

Transformational Ministry Team at Concord - Reggie Renz, Leader of the Transformational Ministry Team, shared with us what Concord has been doing in conjunction with Holmes Rd. School and the Backpack Ministry. She issued an invitation for members from Messiah to join in this endeavor and will help to set us up with times and trainings.

New Business - Tom Johnson – We have changed our payment processor to eliminate fees, so participants in the Simply Giving program will be getting a letter about the need to update their payment information.

Motion to Adjourn

Closing Prayer - Pastor Aileen

Respectfully submitted,
Joanne Ligtenberg
Secretary

**Special Congregation Meeting of
Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church**

Merger of Concord and Messiah
Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2018

Opening Prayer - With a quorum of voting members in attendance, Jeff G. opened the meeting with a prayer.

The Minutes from the Special Congregational Meeting on February 25, 2018 (Sewer Flood) were approved.

Agreement of Merger

Jeff G. reviewed the Agreement of Merger of Concord into Messiah and answered questions from the congregation. The Agreement is a legal document drafted by our attorney that describes the merger of the two religious corporations. After approval by the congregations, it is submitted to the Synod for their approval, and then submitted to the New York State Supreme Court for legal approval.

Motion:

RESOLVED, that Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church of Greece, N. Y. (“Messiah”) merge with The Lutheran Church of Concord (“Concord”) pursuant to S13 of the New York Religious Corporations Law; and it is further

RESOLVED, that Messiah enter into an Agreement of Merger in substantially the form presented to the meeting with such changes as may be approved by the congregation council and that the officers of Messiah, and each of them, are hereby authorized to execute and deliver the Agreement of Merger and also to take such other actions and execute and deliver such other documents as he or she may deem necessary or appropriate to effect such merger.

The motion was made by Vicki Robinson, and seconded by Jim Hartmann. The motion was passed with a vote of 71-0 by written ballot.

Covenant for Merger

Jeff G. explained the Covenant for Merger of The Lutheran Church of Concord and Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church and answered questions from the congregation. The covenant was developed by the Transition Team, consisting of representatives of both congregations, and is a recommendation to the councils and congregations regarding the vision for our ministry together. Major sections include: commonality in worship, ministry & mission, vision for combined community of faith, facilities, staffing, governance, worship, program ministries, financial plan, constitution & bylaws, approval process, and discovering our new identity.

Under staffing, we discussed the possibility of adding a part-time associate pastor position or intern as new worship opportunities arise or programming expands. Comments were made that we should look into doing this soon, as Pastor Aileen could use the help now.

Motion:

RESOLVED, that Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church of Greece, N Y. (“Messiah”) approves the Covenant of Merger with The Lutheran Church of Concord (“Concord”) in substantially the form submitted to the meeting.

The motion was made by Cindy Hutton, and seconded by Joanne Ligtenberg. The motion was passed with a vote of 73-1 by written ballot.

Adjournment

Closing prayer by Pastor Aileen

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Webster, Secretary

Pastor's Letter

Dear Friends

As I reflect on 2018, my head begins to spin. What a whirlwind year we have had. Two congregations became one. A flood caused many upgrades to our physical plant. The building on Holmes Road was cleaned out and sold. An emotional Service of Closure was held in September. Two events – a discipleship workshop and a congregational retreat—gave us opportunity to get to know one another on a deeper level.

Babies were baptized, beloved members were committed to God's care, soups were made, snow was shoveled, trees were sold and given away. It has been a busy place.

I am grateful for your presence and participation in the Body of Christ that is Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church. We are still about the business of working out the kinks of the merger, but what has been done thus far has been done with grace and love. And for that, I cannot thank you enough. Your generous spirit and drive to meet needs and love one another and our neighbors is inspirational.

As we move forward into 2019, I want to thank the Hub and the former Church Council who have all worked so well together: Sandy Volta, Jeff Gerstenberger, Ellen Meyer, Jeff Ulreich, Brian Smith, Rod Speer, Tod Ferguson, Tarra Hartmann, Joanne Neimi, Judy Webster, Joyce Callen, Cathy Coe, Reggie Renz, Mark Sutliff, Helen Stone, Tom Johnson, Debbie Bartlett, Shelly Knapp.

This year I look forward to continuing to deepen our relationships with one another and with our Savior. I am excited about the opportunities for small group sessions in February and for March and for the celebration of the merger on February 10. I hope that you plan to be part of all of the excitement that is ahead.

I also encourage you to continue doing all that you do in Christ's name, not only here, but outside of our doors. It is you who carries the Kingdom of God into the world and makes it a reality!

Blessings on the New Year!

Pastor Aileen

Music Ministry Report

“My life flows on in endless song; above earth’s lamentation, I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn that hails a new creation. No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that Rock I’m clinging. Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?” **Robert Lowry**

This past year has been an exciting one for all the music ministries of the church! Although we as a community have faced many challenges in this past year, how can we keep from singing? The gift of music is one of Messiah’s ministries in its reaching out to our community and world and would not be possible without many volunteers cheerfully giving their time and talents. This report is a summary of the many ways music enriches our lives at Messiah and in the community and helps us to proclaim the Word of God.

At the beginning of 2018, Messiah continued with two worship services (11:00 and 5:00) as a reflection of our growing relationship with our sister church of Concord. After the completion of the merger, and the selling of Concord’s property, our combined churches moved to two services on Sunday. (10:00 and 5:00) The Worship Team and I are in an ongoing process, continuing to discern ways to honor the worship traditions of both churches. I continue to choose liturgies and hymns for the services and am working to include music from both congregations.

Our devoted choir members support our Sunday morning services. I am constantly grateful and appreciative for their service to the church! Even though we have worked together a lot in the past few years, I also wish to welcome all the new choir members from Concord! During Holy Week, the choirs joined together to present Dale Wood’s *Service of Darkness* for the Maundy Thursday service at Messiah, and anthems at the Good Friday service at Concord. The Messiah Choir was honored to participate as a joint choir with Concord in the Service of Closure at Concord. In December, the now combined choir presented Antonio Vivaldi’s *Gloria* at the 10:00 service. Afterwards, we enjoyed several hours of Christmas caroling to our shut-ins. The Messiah Ringers continued to provide their talents to services during the year. The children presented a wonderful Christmas drama at the 5:00 Children’s Pageant on December 23.

The Praise Band continues to participate in worship approximately once a month and was especially noticeable in the Fall Festival Worship Service with a lot of new music added to the repertoire from the Youth Gathering the previous summer. Thanks to Neal Bourque, Harrison Hutton, Amy Mitchell, Jack Mitchell, Andrew La Favor, Samantha and Sydney Weiss, Liam Worden and others. My main priority continues to be to give opportunities for all people, including kids, to have a chance to use their musical gifts for the service of the church. I gave an organ recital on Christmas Eve before the 7:30 service, and we were blessed to have instrumentalists and vocalists present the yearly Feast of Music before the 10:30 Christmas Eve service. For Easter, we had a brass quartet led by Gary Samulski. I continue to be grateful for the musical talent we have in the church!

The annual MAD (Music-Art-Drama) camp held in August was once again a great success! This year’s production was *Stone Soup*, a retelling of the story about the joys of sharing. This production was a recognition of the many years of MAD camp, as this was the very first story told back in 2008! Many thanks go to all the volunteers who continue to help make this exciting week possible! This past year has seen several major changes. The merger with Concord has produced many exciting new possibilities. The switch from the Revised Common Lectionary to the Narrative Lectionary has given us new scriptures and stories to ponder and learn. The participation of the teenagers in worship has been particularly gratifying for me! As we ponder God’s gift of music to us, come and sing, ring handbells, or play an instrument with praise and thanksgiving as we worship God through music! As the hymn says, *“How Can I Keep from Singing?”*

Dr. Willie La Favor
Director of Music

President's Report

Looking back on 2018, two major events stand out. On the night of January 30th a pump associated with a sewer repair on Mt Read Blvd failed, and approximately 40,000 gallons of water backed up into the lower level of the church. With the help of dozens of volunteers, professional cleaners, asbestos abatement technicians, kitchen designers, construction crews, and insurance adjusters, we overcame a potentially devastating situation and re-built and re-equipped the lower level of the church to provide a safe and welcoming space that better fits our ministry needs. The total expense for the flood repairs and recovery was about \$205,000, and with the exception of our \$1000 deductible and about \$12,000 in kitchen enhancements, our expenses were covered by insurance. Heartfelt thanks go to the many, many people who responded in so many ways to minimize the disruption and restore the lower level so quickly and efficiently!

The second major event was the merger of Messiah and Lutheran Church of Concord. While we had been moving towards a merger, the timeframe was suddenly shortened in mid-June when Concord received an attractive offer on their property with the goal of completing the sale before the end of September. The joint Transition Team accelerated planning for the merger and worked diligently to complete a Covenant for Merger that defined our vision for our life together as a combined congregation. The Covenant was completed in late August and both congregations approved the Covenant as well as an Agreement of Merger (a legal document describing the merger of the two churches) at Congregation Meetings held on September 9th. A Service of Closure was held at Concord on September 14th and our first joint worship as a combined community was held on September 16th. The real estate closing was completed on September 21st and on November 1st we received legal approval of the merger from the New York State Supreme Court. Concord's mission statement "Gathering, growing, going, for the glory of God" and Messiah's mission statement "Called into community, gifted to serve; Glorifying God through love in action!" express a common desire to equip our members to proclaim the good news of Christ's love for all of creation. Once again, deep thanks go to the many, many people who worked through the summer to listen, support, plan, and bring our communities into union!

In addition, there were many other great things that happened this past year. We hired Pastor Hans Irmer to support Pastor Aileen with visitation, Bible study leadership, and occasional preaching. Our youth traveled to Houston for the National Youth Gathering and we had a successful Christmas tree sale to raise money towards their 2021 gathering. We continued to provide food and fellowship for the broader community and started a second Soup-er Saturday lunch on the 3rd Saturday of the month. We expanded our role in providing Thanksgiving baskets, and participated in the CROP walk and East Avenue Grocery Run. We moved forward on the next phases of engineering and infrastructure for our new VRF heating and cooling system, and we painted the sanctuary and installed new carpeting.

God continues to call us to be a voice of love and truth in the world. As we head into 2019, you can anticipate continued focus on merging our communities and developing a vision and goals to guide our ministry and witness into the future.

Jeff Gerstenberger

**The Lutheran Church of Concord
Concord Council Final Annual Report - 2018**

The Council welcomed new member, Brian Smith, at the beginning of the year, and Joanne Niemi and Ellen Meyer were approved by the congregation to serve again after expiration of their two-three year terms, with thanks and appreciation. Their knowledge and background were a much needed resource as we faced a difficult year. Debbie Bartlett continued her term until she asked to resign in March, at which time, Council appointed Brad Roberts to serve in her place for the remainder of the year. The Council met regularly, with the prospect of merger or consolidation occurring in the next year or so.

Council meetings were begun with prayer as we renewed our commitment to lead this congregation forward.

The 2018 Church Council members and officers were:

Sandy Volta	President
Joanne Niemi	Vice President
Ellen Meyer	Secretary
Tod Ferguson	
Reggie Renz	
Helen Stone	
Brian Smith	
Joyce Callen	
Brad Roberts	Treasurer and replacement Council member

Church Officer:

Debbie Bartlett	Financial Secretary (resigned as Council member during year)
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In March, the congregation voted at a Special Congregation Meeting to authorize Concord's Council to enter into formal discussions for merger or consolidation with Messiah, and to list our church property for sale. Concord's Ad Hoc Committee and Messiah's Accompaniment Team were combined into a Transition Team and discussed format for blending of the two congregations.

In June, an offer was received for sale of Concord's church property from Morningstar Christian Fellowship Church, and that offer was approved at a further Special Congregation Meeting. We would later learn of connections that several Concord people had to Pastor Pfeiffer. By those individuals having connections, many of us also came to feel that we had a connection. The knowledge that our beloved church property would continue to be used as a church and provide a worship space to others was a great comfort.

Over the summer, our attorney prepared the merger agreements and the Transition Team drafted a Covenant, detailing how we would move forward, and the promises for the future. This amazing group of people demonstrated the caring and supportive nature of the people here at Messiah, and so many individuals put in countless hours of work. And, we received wonderful input and answers from Jeff Human, the Synod attorney who helped us with the legal steps.

All of the discussions and work lead to the votes on September 9th where the congregations of both Concord and Messiah approved the Merger Agreements and Covenant of how we envision the future. Concord's Service of Closure was held on September 14, 2018, with the sale of the property finalized the following week.

During all of the flurry of things happening at Concord, the Council was committed to open communication with the congregation, and used the Concord Updates to keep members informed of Council actions and of all the steps being taken and to provide a forum for questions and making decisions throughout the year.

I personally want to thank our committed Council members and officers, for contributing your time and energy generously. We set a record with the number of Special Council meetings, on top of our regular monthly council meetings, and e-mail communications and telephone calls as we faced the many details and decisions that needed to be made throughout the merger discussion process and the sale of the church building. And we tackled a To Do List that rivaled any “honey do list” out there, in order to take care of all of the details, specifics and deadlines. As the elected representatives of the Concord congregation, the Council members demonstrated faithful dedication to handling the requirements under our constitution and the business matters of our church. It was a time of uncertainty, stress and change for Concord, but also an opportunity for hope and renewal, and the Council members all went above and beyond in their dedication and commitment.

We all mourn the loss of Helen Stone in November. 2018 was her fifth year as a Council member and she was a strong and dedicated advocate, and often provided us with insight into the feelings and needs of members, or suggested ways that we could do a better job in communicating. She lived the role of a Shepherd, and provided care and compassion for all of us. She is truly missed.

We were supported by our Office Manager, Jennie Bowker, through the closing of our church property, and appreciated her hard work, dedication and support. We also recognize the talent and dedication of Bob Neusatz, who served Concord as our organist for many years, providing us with services filled with amazing music. It was hard to say goodbye to both of them for these roles, and our love and appreciation for them will always carry forward.

We are especially grateful to Pastor Aileen Robbins, for her leadership, care and guidance, and to the members of Messiah who worked so hard with us to figure out the details of moving forward and who felt our sadness at the closing of our church, and supported us with their compassion and concern and with welcoming arms. We are thankful to now be a part of the congregation of Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church, and that this is now our new home. Praise God for each of you!

Sandy Volta, Lutheran Church of Concord Council

Worship Ministry Report

WORSHIP VISION STATEMENT

Gathered as a community of God's children, celebrating our redemption through the cross of Christ, with hearts and minds open to hear God's word, we anticipate a fresh encounter with the Holy Spirit. We know God is alive and among us, engaging us, and speaking to us whenever we lift our voices together in praise. Through our enthusiastic participation in music, liturgy, prayer, and sacraments we create a place where people are comfortable to express the full range of human emotion. We recognize that God is responding with comfort, encouragement, reassurance, forgiveness, blessing, challenge, excitement, hope, power, inspiration, and relationship - empowering us to carry the good news of the Gospel into the world.

Worship & Music Goals for 2015 – 2018

- Create a sacred space leading to a fresh encounter with the Holy Spirit.
- Provide engaging worship in which everyone can participate and understand.
- Increase participation in worship by providing ways to make all disciples more comfortable in worship leadership roles.
- Equip Christ's disciples with a language and spirit to carry the gospel story from the sanctuary into the world.

To ensure that we are creating a sacred space to provide engaging worship requires the gifts and talents of those who serve at Messiah by:

- Getting our sanctuary ready for worship. THE ALTAR GUILD (Marcia Laskowski)
- Distributing the body and blood of Jesus Christ. ASSISTING MINISTERS (Pastor Aileen)
- Welcoming disciples and visitors and guests. THE GREETERS (Barb Corman)
- Contributing to the needs of those gathered and seeking to show hospitality. THE USHERS (Ed Orlando)
- Reading the lessons at each Sunday service. THE LECTORS
- Planning meaningful and creative worship experiences for the whole congregation. THE WORSHIP TEAM (Pastor Aileen Robbins, Willie LaFavor, Shelly Knapp, Cherrie Crudele, Jeff Gerstenberger, Sandy Moncrief, Tarra Hartmann, Tarri Mundt, Ed & Susan Orlando, Barb Corman, Joanne Niemi, D. Richard Cobb, Reggie Renz, Ellen Meyer, Wendy Taylor, Marcia Laskowski)

Messiah's Worship Team met 6 times in preparation for 2018 worship experiences, agreeing that each meeting would include the following:

- Prayer (To focus our intention to nurture and develop Christian community as a team)
- Reflections (What has just happened in worship? Successes and disappointments? And Revisions (Ways to improve? Changes? New Ideas to Implement?))
- Upcoming Worship Experiences (Laying out the basis and details for upcoming worship experiences)
- Miscellaneous Matters/Next Steps/Administration followed by Closing Prayer and Adjournment

Reflections: What made the service an exciting experience? What gave it energy? What moments during service were the best we could offer to Jesus and those who came to worship? What do we want to repeat? What do we want to make sure never happens again? What can make the service even better and to the next level?

- **Narrative Lectionary:** We continued to use the NARRATIVE LECTIONARY
- **Lent:** In alignment with the Narrative Lectionary we “told the story” beginning with The Triumphal Entry where the journey begins, complete with the distribution of palms, six lighted candles, and each week the children’s sermon was delivered by a different “story teller.” Each week a candle was extinguished and by Lent’s end we were in darkness.
- **Journey to Easter:** “This little light of mine.” To symbolize shining the light of Easter into our community, each bulletin held a small white candle.
- **Holy Week/Easter:** 4 great sermons in 4 days (Whew!). Maybe we should identify members who wish to preach?
- **Combined Services:** 10 am the first Sunday of each month at MELC as we transitioned to one congregation. Everyone wore nametags.
- **Ad Hoc Summer Worship Planning Committee:** This committee met three times to brainstorm and develop program recommendations for a series of sermons for the summer. Committee included members of MELC and LCC
- **Summer Justice Series:** “When did I see you . . . “ The goals: Awareness of social issues, what can we do to remedy/respond? To wed our reality to Jesus’ reality. To equip our disciples to stand up and speak out for what is just. To educate our disciples about the Biblical principals of justice. Issues: Biblical justice, food scarcity, immigration/refugees, racism, incarceration, and economic justice. “Whole series was incredibly powerful” “People were engaged.” “By the end of summer we were on overload.” “We needed breathing room.” NOTE: LCC used gathering time after 9 am service to process/discuss the sermon.
- **Holy Closure Service:** September 14th –“joyful music,” “feeling loved and supported for the Blessing and the dessert.”
- **One Congregation:** On September 16th, MELC and LCC were officially united.

Revisions:

- All the children and youth in school are participating in the Children’s sermon
- Communion by Intinction on a regular basis through transition
- Blending the music styles and traditions of both former churches
- Easter Vigil not using Power Point this year providing more focus on the stories being told (Vigil in the Sanctuary due to reconstruction of the fellowship hall)
- As a result of connections made during the Summer Series, establishing relationships with *No One Left Behind* and *Mary’s Place*, both organizations support refugee populations
- Making larger print bulletins and ear buds more accessible
- Removing some chairs to provide more space to accommodate walkers:
- Eliminating Thanksgiving Day service allowing all to spend day with family and friends
- Holding Children’s Christmas pageant on the 23rd at 5 pm instead of Christmas Eve

Entering 2019, the Worship Team and all Worship Ministries of Messiah will continue to open their hearts to God and the Holy Spirit who inspires us and guides us in all things. As an enlarged worship community may we as God’s people be changed and uplifted as we continue to worship in Christ’s name. Let us welcome all that lies ahead with joy and confidence.

Peace Be With You All,
Shelly Knapp

Faith Formation Ministry Report

FAITH FORMATION VISION: *We are disciples of the living God, learning at the feet of Jesus, open to the Spirit working in us and through us to make Christ visible. We work together in love, challenging each other to grow and act in faith. We recognize and celebrate God's work in ourselves, in others, and in the community.*

The faith formation report looks a little different this year, than it has in years past. This report contains a bit of reflection, explanation and also forward-thinking plans, in the life of Messiah, as it relates to faith formation.

In October this past year, I suggested to the HUB a restructuring of the faith formation ministry at Messiah with some brief explanation of where the idea was headed. It was met with overwhelming support. So, back to work I went, flushing out vision, goals & budget for what the new faith formation at Messiah may look like.

Below is an excerpt from my HUB report:

“When asked to be part of the HUB in the role of faith formation, I was exploring my call as a leader of youth & their families. As the years have passed and I have explored my call to the faith formation ministry on the HUB, I have wrestled with being “spread thin” between educational adult ministries at Messiah and youth & family ministries.

I recommend the formation of a new & additional core council (HUB) position of Youth & Family. I recommend that the HUB position of Faith Formation continue, but with an adult educational focus & experience for its ministry. This opens up the opportunity for an additional council person to explore their gifts of ministry in the adult faith formation scope, as I hope to be nominated in the position of Youth & Family ministry.

I have always felt inadequately equipped to lead our youth in the way that I thought they deserved. I felt inadequate in time & resources. That was compounded by the fact that most get together with the youth were to try and raise funds to attend a youth gathering. I believe the youth gathering experience should be a gift to our young people, rather than something they need to earn by raising money and making sure they are “seen” raising money. I believe our young people deserve ministry to call their own, with full participation & opportunities to make their own faith choices in the life of the church at large and at home...just as we have as adults.” Now, for the looking ahead plan:

The vision part: If the burden of having to raise funds for the youth gathering was erased, what would youth & teen ministry of Messiah look like? I've never had the chance to experience, yet answer that. I believe this ministry would be an active group of young people who are busy in discovering their own faith identity with support from their church family, each other and their adult leaders. In the past, youth who gathered together (youth group for example), did so socially and for fun. There is nothing wrong with that. But, all other gathering times were then basically fund raising focused. I believe that this is not the best we can offer as a church. I believe our young disciples deserve more. We all are called to walk with one another and to be the light in a very dark world. I want us to walk with these young disciples out in the world NOW. I want us to go look, watch, talk about and be Christ in the world NOW. These youth should not have to wait for a youth gathering that comes around every 3 years to experience that. Youth are classroom educated by our pastor and through the loving & caring adults who help teach Sunday School and Confirmation. Our youth deserve more than the burden of having to raise funds outside of that education. Please see youth gathering line item designation in the budget portion of this annual report.

The goal part: We have a new youth space in our building. The youth (teens) and I already have design plans and some great ideas for our new space. Designing, decorating and making the room our own is more than just remodeling the space. It's getting us prepared for what we are going to do with that space moving forward. Through working and painting, we grow and bond together in a different way. And yes, we find and learn about God while we do these things with each other. As a long range goal, I would like to see confirmation class moved into that space someday. And it will certainly lend itself as a great meeting room for other groups. I'd like to focus on the room (with some fun activities thrown in there too) for a year. Reach out and service will then be our focus as we learn about what is happening, available and how we might make a difference in our town, city and world. I'd like to have speakers come to speak to the youth about justice issues. I'd like to take the youth to places that are broken & needing help. I'd like them to have opportunities to care for and give back to the adults in our church family, by their own suggestion as to where or what they feel called to do. I look forward to walking side by side with them as we compassionately care for one another and our world. They (the youth) will continue to look in hope about where God might be calling them. But mostly, I look forward to talking with them after those experiences. Talking about what we've seen, experienced, felt, tasted and heard. Because it is in those conversations that we often find God is and was at work right under our noses. Faith Formation is about education. Education & experience is the best way to find ones vocation, our call, our passion or what speaks to our heart. With the weight of fund raising eliminated, youth & family ministry will thrive and grow. I am eager & excited to continue to be a part of this new ministry look & focus and to walk beside our young disciples in support during this new time. This youth & family budget is important to the life of our church. It is what is needed to move forward as the growing, vibrant, forward thinking church that we are.

Adult faith formation will (at this point) be structured and look much the same, but with some fresh new ideas thrown in there. Adult faith formation will continue to cover the ministries it did in the past: Bible study, Prayer Cell, Spiritual Growth Group, the Library team, Women's Breakfast & Study, devotional materials and more. I have no doubt it will include some new ministries under its umbrella by the end of 2019. With the new restructuring, I believe it will open up opportunity for fresh new ideas and experiences, all meant to enrich & deepen our faith.

Tarra Hartmann

Library

2018 has been another banner year for your Messiah Library. Over 100 books were borrowed and once again fiction was the most popular genre.

As is our habit, we support other ministries when we are able and often supplement our reading displays with additional information we consider to have value to our congregation.

We are particularly proud of 2018's literary additions.

FICTION

We purchased the Hope Harbor series by Irene Hannon. These novels rival the Amish books for interest but they are set in the 21st century and the characters and situations are those we are more familiar with.

NONFICTION

2018's authors are household names such as President Jimmy Carter, Maria Shriver, Roma Downey and Kathie Lee Gifford. Each offers an important viewpoint and range of experiences to consider in our spiritual journey. Find these selections in our Christian Experience section.

CHILDREN

Beautifully illustrated, our newest children's books tackle the tough issues kids today face. These books also offer parents an easy pathway to discussion. Abandonment by parent, adoption, Alzheimer's Disease bullying, cancer, death in family, death of pet, divorce, minority status, teacher's pet travails, and gratitude are among the subjects covered. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his "I have a Dream" speech, in both CD and written word as well as a Black Lives Matter book round out the purchases.

OTHER

We added a Black History unit as well as Women's History Month posters. These posters may be borrowed by reservation through the church office.

Handouts on recognizing child abuse were an adjunct to a display of parenting books.

E PLURIBUS UNUM and IN GOD WE TRUST featured photographic exhibits from 3 American Experience WPA portfolios. These pictures may also be borrowed by reservation.

We instituted a program we call "Basket of Books" for our shut-ins. If you desire this service, just let the office know.

The library also sponsored a yearlong subscription to Spark Family for each Sunday School child.

We gave away children's books at Christmas, Easter, and during MAD Camp. Judy Merritt-Speed generously donated her daughter, Beverly's, collection of Amish books, which we offered to our luncheon guests. Over 2 dozen bibles were also given away on Super Saturday's.

And lastly, our new Concord friends graciously donated their puzzle ministry to the library. "Puzzlemania" became an instant hit.

As always, our librarians are happy to help you locate a book or other library materials.

Jo-Ann Honan

Reach Out Ministry Report

We extend Christ's love by reaching out with open arms and hearts. We joyfully welcome all people into fellowship, service and Christian worship. Called to be Christ-like disciples we support each other and care for all people. Inspired by the power of the Holy Spirit, we serve all in daily life.

2018 has been a year of changes!

January flood made the lower level of the church out of commission until May. However, we have a new kitchen with an upright dishwasher and more storage!

47 people were served soup and sandwiches for the first Soup-er Saturday since the flood. They were thrilled to be back and loved the new space.

July 17th was a new event for Reach Out Ministry. Dewey/Stone Family Fun Night we set up a table with fliers for Soup-er Saturday, Men's Breakfast with dates and speakers, Creative Hands with shawls, Dresses Around the World and Erna's Hope sold bracelets.

Concord Lutheran Church merged with Messiah. Shortly thereafter, coffee hour was moved to the fellowship hall where tables and chairs made fellowship with others more convenient for everyone!

September 23rd was the Country Fair which was a success again with Worship under the big tent and stage, Bingo with prizes for the winners, fun lawn games, popcorn, hots, rolls, outstanding salads and desserts and new this year corn on the cob roasted on the coals.

October 20th began another Soup-er Saturday on the third Saturday of the month. 94 people were served a warm lunch and food to take home. Thank you Wendy Taylor and Team!

December 7th Kids Christmas Workshop (held 2nd Friday of December) where children have so many choices from our crafty members, made gifts for their family members. Once the children make their gifts, they then wrapped them to take home for Christmas. Pizza, juice and ice cream sandwiches are served.

Thank you everyone who participated, purchased ingredients for Soup-er Saturdays, hosted coffee hour, made food for funerals, set up/tore down, cleaned up, cooked or prayed for Reach Out Ministry! We would not be able to do it without YOU!

Judy Webster

Service Ministry Report

We are all God's Children. At Messiah, we will endeavor to be God's hands and feet, serving all of his people. Using our God given gifts, with thoughtful prayer, commitment, and generosity, we will provide a variety of services to meet the needs of the community.

Summary of Messiah Service team projects and events in 2018

- Lutheran campus ministry dinner at RIT – Messiah hosted 2 of these events. This ministry provides a service followed by a meal to the students and is sponsored by local churches. The meal is a nice time for fellowship amongst students and hosts.
- RAIHN (Rochester Interfaith Hospitality Network) – Messiah hosted 4 events this year. – This ministry helps homeless families to achieve sustainable independence.
- Tops bread pickup and delivery – Ongoing throughout the year. Provides bread for those in need in our community.
- House of Mercy clothing and blanket collection – Winter months – providing coats and blankets to the homeless.
- St. Johns Home transporters. – Messiah hosted 2 Sundays. Volunteers assist moving St. Johns residents to and from their worship service.
- RAIHN car city – April. People involved in this ministry ask for sponsorship, then spend a night in their vehicles. Money collected helps homeless.
- Crop walk for Hunger. – May. Walkers get sponsors then walk a 1 or 5 mile route. This year Messiah collected \$2088 to help world hunger.
- Service projects at LCLC – Oct. A weekend retreat at LCLC provides our congregation an opportunity to help spruce up the camp. This year there were also projects for Erna's Hope and cookie trays were put together, then distributed to our community First Responders as a thank you for all they do. The weekend is also a great time of fellowship, reflection and fun.
- Thanksgiving Baskets – Nov. This amazing ministry, headed by the Orlando's, collects food to make complete dinners (including a turkey) that are distributed to those in need in our community. This year over 70 dinners were distributed.
- Grocery Run – October. Runners ask for sponsorship and run a 5K. Money collected is used for local benevolence. \$2250 was raised last year and helped these ministries this year:
 - Loop Ministries
 - Greece Food Shelf
 - Maggie's Kids
 - Gas/Food gift cards
- Operation Christmas Child – Nov. Shoebox gifts are collected and distributed globally to countries in need.
- Christmas Tree sales. – Nov-Dec. This ministry sells Christmas trees to our community. \$\$ collected are used to help our youth go to an ELCA Youth gathering. This year \$7300 was raised.
- Winter coat collection and distribution – Nov-Dec. Judy Merritt-Speed heads this ministry that provides winter coats to our community youth in need.

The Service team also distributed \$6250 in Benevolence to these Ministries/Charities in 2018:

- Maggie's Kids
- Angel tree
- Feed my starving children
- Genesee Finger Lakes Conference
- Greece Food Shelf
- Gods Work, Our Hands
- Greece Habitat for Community
- LCLC
- RAIHN
- Loop Ministries

RAIHN

We offer hospitality to the RAIHN families four times a year in rotations approximately every three months. In 2018, we volunteered with the RAIHN families in January, April, July and October. The families are fed and housed at the Lutheran Church of the Incarnate Word, corner of East Avenue and Goodman Street, and volunteers from Messiah and Bethany Presbyterian provide support to the volunteers from Incarnate Word, by filling some of the many roles that complete our schedule for a given rotation week – Sunday to Sunday. A schedule goes out, via email, about a month prior to each rotation, which details the times and roles we need for our upcoming week, ranging from setting up beds and rooms for our guests, cooking a meal, serving and cleaning up after the meal, playing games with the children, chaperoning overnight with our guests, to doing up the laundry at the end of the week once the families have moved on to the next hosting congregation. There are also opportunities for volunteers to help out with reception duties at the Day Center, located at 142 Webster Avenue, where the families stay during the day as they work on finding new housing, or job opportunities. Or you could volunteer to drive the RAIHN Van, which shuttles the families to and from the Hosting Congregations and the Day Center daily, and also takes them from the current Host Congregation to the next Host at the end of each rotation week. There are training sessions offered periodically, which are of great assistance in answering all your questions about how to be a truly effective RAIHN volunteer. In addition, I am always available to chat with you about this awesome ministry for homeless families in our community. So what are you waiting for? Give me a call, or see me at church, and get onboard with the other faithful members of our RAIHN volunteer team as we serve together with the volunteers from Incarnate Word and Bethany Presbyterian.

Another way you can benefit the RAIHN families and program, is to participate in the various fundraisers held throughout the year.

- If you're a bowler, you'll want to mark your calendar for the **"STRIKE" OUT HOMELESSNESS** event scheduled for **Sunday, February 10, 2019 at BOWL-A-ROLL LANES**. See the poster on the Communications Wall in the Narthex for more details.
- **SAVE THE DATE!! "Grace through Music" ...a benefit concert for RAIHN** to be held on Monday, March 4, 2019 at 7 PM at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 25 Westminster Road, Rochester, 14607. This event is being organized by Lara Sipols, RPO member and Nancy Frank, Board Vice-Chair. More details to follow soon.

I look forward to hearing from you and chatting about how you too can become one of the faithful and dedicated volunteers in our shared RAIHN ministry.

Tarri Mundt 957-4022

Operation Christmas Child

Thanks to the Hub for allowing this unique ministry to happen in 2018. We shared 45 shoeboxes filled with LOVE, toys, school supplies, health items and THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST. Our boxes traveled to 8 countries including Malawi, the Ukraine, the Bahamas, Togo, Peru, Ghana, Ecuador and a hard-to-reach area (Samaritan's Purse term for a country where Christianity is persecuted by the government). Forty-five children received multiple gifts from loving Messiah Christians and shared in a learning session introducing Jesus Christ to them in their own language. What a great way to share the grace of Jesus Christ.

Thanks, Larry Dennis

Property Ministry Report

Property Mission:

As faithful followers of God, we join together to provide a sanctuary from life's troubles and storms. A Holy place where all of God's people can come to be embraced in the care, comfort and safety of Jesus's loving arms. We offer our time, talents and treasure to provide a worship space for the Lord's people to give worship, honor, glory and praise to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

My thanks and praise go out to the Property Team for the time and talents they put forth each year. The gals and guys plant and nurture the flower gardens and shrubs to make Messiah presentable, welcoming and inviting from the outside. While the crew that cleans, does the same for inside the church. Then from constant repairs, to carpentry, electrical or plumbing work. The team will try to tackle any project if we can to save money, but more importantly "To Give Back". My sincere thanks and gratitude for all those who keep the church property looking Absolutely Marvelous !

The Great Sewer Flood (TGFSF) of 2018 as it will be known in the greater Messiah archives. Hit us with an unexpected curveball on Jan 30th to test our backbone and resolve. The GSF started around 7:45pm and ended around midnight. Conservatively, approx. 50,000 gallons of sewer water backed up into our lower level restroom toilets, sinks, drains, utility rooms, elevator pit and spreading out on to every square inch of the lower level. The average depth of the sewer water was approx. 1" - 2". We even called in a 3,000 gallon vacuum truck from National Vacuum Co. that night to prevent sewer water from rising up to the high voltage circuit breakers in the small boiler room, during the period of high sewer tide. The cause of the sewage back up was a failure of one (of which there are two) sewer diversion pumps on Mt. Read Blvd. When the one pump failed, sewage water backed up and forced itself into our facility. Once the Town of Greece and Villager Construction were able to get a replacement pump operating in the failed pump place the sewage water stopped entering our facility, some 4 hours in time. Resulting in putting the entire Lower Level out of commission for several months.

The next morning we got together National Vacuum personnel who returned to squeegee off remaining sewage water on the floors and then swabbed all the Lower Level decks with a decontaminate solution. Once the decking had dried, a second decontaminate solution was applied. Due to the vastness of this incident we called in the professionals whom normally deal with these types of situations and ended up hiring Servpro of Rochester. As floor tiles started to pop up and many walls were still damp, with mold starting to grow several days later.

A Lower Level plan was developed by all parties involved. The entire lower level would be cordoned off. Decontamination and Remediation phases would be first, followed by a Restoration phase. This allowed us time to "Vision" a newer and updated look to the Lower Level, especially operations in the kitchen area that were some 50 years old. As we moved forward with the phases we would get tossed with another huge curveball. That being, asbestos was confirmed under the Fellowship floor tiles. Setting the plan back a couple of weeks until all asbestos was remediated. It would be until May 5th when we officially opened our Lower Level doors again to the community for fitting Souper Saturday. Also our thanks to Concord Lutheran for stepping up and letting folks use the Concord facility, while ours was out of service.

TGFSF Lessons Learned and Key Points:

- On 1/30/18 approx. 50,000 gallons of sewer water entered the entire Lower Level.
- For more than 3 months the Lower Level was out of service. It reopened 5/5/18
- Many folks stepped up to offer their ideas, but more importantly their help, time and solutions. Thank you, we are Blessed to have you!
- When you're in the Sewage, hire the professionals! We thought Servpro did a great job.

- Be prepared for the unexpected, like asbestos, heating, plumbing or electrical issues.
- Not one government official from the Town of Greece came in to check on us, by which the original Mt. Read root cause and failure occurred. So much for being a good responsible neighbor ?
- Thank the Lord we had very good insurance and coverage, Church Mutual.
- We went from a 50 year old Lower Level reality and implemented a Vision for all to enjoy today. Also, future generations shouldn't have any "unexpected" burdens to deal with.
- A little over \$200,000 was spent restoring the Lower Level. Thank the Lord we already had a Capital Fund to pull reserves from, to transform new Vision into Reality. Along with insurance reimbursements from Church Mutual.

On to Norm, or the Normal MELC business... Out with the maroon carpet and yellow walls. A new plush blue carpet was installed in the Sanctuary and Narthex. Along with the Sanctuary walls receiving a long overdue fresh coat of paint and complementing color. One of the Large HV/AC outside units (inside the north white fencing) had to get replaced due to a tiny hole in the high pressure coil. Sorry... Again our insurance company bailed us out of this, covering the majority of the replacement and repair. A new Fresh air unit (outside and English Rd. side) that was required by the Codes for areas of assembly, has been placed in service. This unit now services our Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall. Again, small repairs are always being done somewhere and my thanks to those folks who perform them.

Challenges for 2019 are the unexpected and the expected... Our internet and telecommunication is giving us sporadic problems causing business interruptions because of its age and speed. A small committee has been formed looking into various options to reduce our costs and the need for reliable speed and service. A new Safety Committee is suggesting ideas for medical, fire, security and other incidents that may affect us, which was a recommendation from the ELCA. Our boilers will need continued TLC and a touch of maintenance, as our intent is to wean off the boilers and progress into the next new phases of Variable Refrigerant Flow aka VRF, or layman's terms of AC & Heat for our office areas. Our entire complex now has excellent overhead roofing shelter, but there are several future big ticket items that need to be majorly spruced up or replaced. Like the light pole in the parking lot isn't working now due a underground wire breach under the asphalt needs repair. We need everyone's help in your Time or Talents. Along with the continued support of the Foundation for the Future Capital Campaign. Please continue your gracious donations to the Capital campaign, so it will continue to grow to meet or exceed our objectives. In order keep our Lord's House operational and functioning for our Community at large.

Respectfully Submitted for The Property Ministry Team,
Rod Speer (Chair and Chief)

Isaiah 11:1

A new branch will grow from a stump of a tree; so a new king will come from the family of Jesse.



Communications Ministry Report

We empower Messiah's disciples to do the work of Christ by make accurate information available to all in the church and in the larger community. We effectively explain, remind, refresh, and refocus the work of Messiah's ministries. We enable the coming-together of individuals into a cohesive community

The Communications team continues to look at how we are communicating to both our members and the community at large. Even though the team doesn't control verbal communication, please remember how important that is. As you get to know each other, listen and share, and make some new friends this coming year!

Messiah's ministries, activities and events are communicated in a variety of ways - weekly bulletin announcements, the monthly Herald newsletter, the communications board, website, and local newspapers.

At the end of the year, we started a telephone system for notifying people who do not have email of funeral/memorial services. (This information is sent out via a congregational email) To be on the calling list, notify the church office with the best number to reach you.

The Herald is published monthly, with the exception of a combined June/July edition. Before the merger with Concord was complete, we integrated several of their activities in the Herald to encourage participation by all.

Our website continues to keep our members and the community informed about both our church and its upcoming activities. An update to the website will be made in 2019.

Our events have been published in the Greece Post, the Greece News (a monthly publication), and the Democrat and Chronicle. This year two of our events were featured in Caurie Putnam's Our Towns column in the Sunday D & C. If you have an event you would like advertised, let us know (see Ed Orlando's article below.)

As we began worshipping together, Messiah and Concord telephone directories were made available to all. A new telephone directory will be created in the early part of 2019. Throughout the year, be sure to let the office know of any changes to your address, phone numbers (home and cell) or e-mail(s)

New members are always welcome to join our team. Watch the bulletin for meeting dates.

Cathy Coe

Good Stuff Group

The Good Stuff group meets the second Wednesday of every month at 1 pm. Our mission is to review the calendar of events and determine what needs to be communicated to the public. It also keeps the calendar up-to-date, so if you need a room, provide us with the information to update the calendar. Just a reminder if you would like to have your group or event advertised in the local newspapers you need to contact us with an article that you would like to have us submit to the newspapers. Please contact Ed Orlando, the church office (Cathy Coe), Maer Rivera or Judy Merritt Speed if you have anything you want to get advertised both to the calendar and the public.

Ed Orlando

Stewardship Ministry Report

The highlight this year was our Stewardship Campaign, which was titled “Growing into God’s Promise Together.” It centered on gift giving, especially the giving of our gifts of Time, Talent and Treasures to God. In addition to focusing on God’s gifts, we showed ways that Concord and Messiah have combined our stewardship gifts to reach more people as one church. A couple of examples are adding a second monthly Souper Saturday and expanding the Backpack Program. This year’s Stewardship verse sums up how we reach more people by coming together and trusting God’s promise. *“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there maybe food in my house. Test me in this, says the LORD Almighty, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”* (Malachi 3:10)

I would like to thank my co-chairperson, Julie Gerstenberger, the Stewardship Team, the Finance Team, Pastor Aileen, Cathy and those of you who participated in the Temple Talks to make this year’s campaign successful.

Stewardship will be different starting in 2019 as your HUB decided to split the Finance and Stewardship ministries. This will give more resources and attention to promoting yearlong stewardship. Messiah has shown faithful stewardship of God’s gifts in many ways. This move will make it easier for everyone to grow as stewards.

In Christ’s Name,

Tom Johnson

Finance Director's Report

We started the year with an approved balanced budget of \$278,000. This was a decrease from 2017 of \$20,000 and some painful reductions. The hope was that we would not suffer any negative emergency spending through the year. However, it was barely a week after the annual congregational meeting before we suffered "The Great Sewage Flood of 2018." The cleanup and kitchen upgrades came to \$207,255, which included \$30,502 for asbestos removal. Our insurance carrier, Church Mutual, covered \$199,515 of the cost and the remaining \$7,740 came from the capital campaign fund for extra upgrades to the kitchen.

In September, The Church of Concord and Messiah came together as one church. While everyone was sad to see Concord close, the vision going forward is very positive. On a financial level, funds from Concord's sale of their building has paid off Messiah's remaining mortgage balance of \$25,514! Additional contributions to our combined church are planned for the future. What a wonderful financial blessing the people of Concord have brought with them to Messiah!

Our actual pledged amount received for the operating budget came in \$5,342 over budget for 2018. In addition, the Local Benevolence giving was \$21,960 or 121% greater than the budget! Your HUB members worked hard to control spending and we closed the books on 2018 with a \$4,791 positive cash flow placed into the "Current Fund – Carry Over" to balance the budget.

The Capital Campaign Fund has a balance of \$194,033 after \$107,911 was given in 2018 with expenditures of \$74,507 going towards the roof loan (\$12,288); Sanctuary carpet and painting (\$29,700); outside air exchanger unit (\$12,404); engineering drawings (\$12,375); and the previously mentioned kitchen upgrades (\$7,740). Phase II of the HVAC system should start in early 2019.

Total pledges for 2019 are up by 9% or \$19,528 over the 2018 pledged amount. Your HUB has approved a \$315,000 or 13% increased budget for 2019. This includes \$5,000 for the backpack program; \$4,000 for the Youth Gathering; and \$31,000 for Pastor Hans Imer to join our staff as a Pastoral Assistant. These will be discussed at the upcoming Finance Forum.

I would like to thank everyone who has helped with the finances this year, especially members of the Finance Team - Gene Ligtenberg, Scott Bourque, Wayne Reabold and all the weekly counters. Along with members of the Property Management Team, who helped on the major projects; the rest of the property team; the auditing team; my fellow Hub members; Concord's Council members; Cathy Coe and Pastor Aileen. It takes many people to make the church run smoothly and I for one appreciate all that everyone does!

In Christ's Name,

Tom Johnson

Transformational Ministry Report

What is Transformational Ministry? Put simply, it is a team that looks for new ministries which will make a difference in the community and cultivate purpose and excitement in the congregation. Transformational Ministry was created at the Lutheran Church of Concord in 2016 as an intern project for now Pastor Lori Nickloff. The congregation agreed to join her in the endeavor. We started out with a study of Acts over a 10 week period. Bible studies were held on Sunday after service, on Wednesday afternoon and Wednesday evening.

Over the next several months:

- Congregation met to determine our passions
- We met again to determine what was important to us and to give the team some general guidelines.
- A month later we met to assess our strengths and our assets both physical and personal
- At this point 5 members from Messiah joined our team to learn what we were doing and to assist us in our efforts.
- The team wrote a survey and took it out into the community. We spoke to the fire department, police department, local nursing homes, Greece Food Shelf, and Holmes Road School. We got ideas for possible new ministries from Holmes Road School and the Ridge Road Fire District.

Holmes Road School asked for help on a couple of levels. First they needed someone to pick up the backpack bags for the children that were eligible for the free lunch and desired the service. At the time the principal felt she could fund the program from her budget but very quickly that faded away. We also learned that there was a requirement that a 501(C) (3) organization must act as fiduciary. That would be the PTO or a church. The school was also looking for volunteers to read to students and/or be teacher's assistants. Sounded like something we could do.

The Fire department was putting together a program to prevent falls among the elderly. The base of the program was to involve as many groups as possible in the community that would do inspections of homes, build ramps or install bathroom bars, assist with yard clean-up, clutter removal etc. The program only recently got off the ground and the fire department has been notified that we are still interested.

The backpack program is off and running. We currently serve 44 children at two Greece Schools. What is the Backpack program? We purchase bags of food from Food Link. These bags include 2 meals and several snacks to provide the child with food to eat for the weekend during the times that meals may not be provided by others in the household. The meals are easy to prepare even for K-2 children. The meals could be oatmeal or cereal for breakfast, mac and cheese, and beans or tuna. Snacks would be applesauce, granola bars, and fruit strips. Each bag includes a shelf stable milk product. These bags are picked up on Fridays by our awesome volunteers and delivered to the schools. The teachers collect these bags and drop them into the children's backpacks, hence the name – Backpack Program.

Transformational Ministry puts a new ministry together and works to get it up and running. Then we look for someone to take it over for the day to day operation. The Backpack program is coordinated by Kim Mass. She recruits drivers, creates a schedule for the drivers, and files all the required reports to Food Link. She also works with the drivers to create best practices and get the word out to the entire team.

Transformational Ministry will be meeting again in January and will begin the process to look for other ministries. We are looking forward to an exciting 2019.

Be Transformed, Reggie Renz

Men's Breakfast Report

Our men's breakfast ministry was blessed with another successful year. We welcome all men in the community to our format of a delicious breakfast, a devotion time, a guest speaker, and loads of Christian fellowship. This format has supported our mission of providing a fellowship opportunity for all the men in the community. Several Messiah men attend, but we also enjoy the company of many men from other churches in the community as well as men who have no church affiliation. Over the years, there are examples where men attended who later became Messiah members.

A vital part of our Saturday mornings is the ladies team that purchases the food, prepares breakfast, and, in addition, does a major part of the kitchen cleanup. The breakfast planning team does a lot to set up the room and clean it, but our food-prep team delivers a gem for each breakfast. The kitchen team of Susan, Cherri, Stephanie, and Judy is the best. Thank you, ladies.

Our guest speaker topics cover a wide range from non-profit work, to successful businesses, local sports, travel, and politics. We vary the topics figuring there is something for everyone.

We thank the dedicated breakfast planning team of Tom Johnson, Wayne Reabold, Royal Stellrecht, Jim Taylor, and Doug Webster who serve together for this ministry.

Respectfully submitted by Gary Cantleberry

Joy Beyond the Bend

Joy Beyond the Bend has been active monthly since September 2002. This is a support group open to anyone who has lost a family member, friend, relationship, or even a beloved pet. We meet the third Tuesday of every month at 11:30 a.m. in the Messiah parking lot to carpool to a restaurant.

Each month the group has lunch at a restaurant that the members have chosen in advance. Lunch is followed by a meeting held at church. The meeting format always includes a prayer and a meditation, or short topic with discussion. After the meeting we play a card game, Crazy Rummy, and have lots of laughs.

Everyone is welcome and we are pleased that since the merger, we have new members. If you know of a friend who might benefit by being with this group, please invite them. They do not have to be a member of Messiah. For more information about the group, please call Joyce Callen at 225-3868.

Thrivent

Thrivent Action Teams (with \$250 seed money) sponsored our Souper Saturdays, the Pancake Supper, and the Operation Christmas Child packing party.

Additionally members and friends contributed through the Thrivent Choice program \$357 to Messiah's general fund. Through a special program, we collected over 750 food items for the Greece Ecumenical Food Shelf and we were able to supply \$230 in grocery gift cards along with \$1000 contributed to the food shelf by Thrivent in recognition of our great success at sharing with hungry neighbors. If you have questions about how to spur your passion in a particular ministry with help from Thrivent, see Larry Dennis.

Thanks, Larry Dennis

Hub Nominations

Jeff Gerstenberger – President

I'm from Ann Arbor, Michigan and moved to Rochester in 1988. As an electrical engineer at AppliedLogix, I design electronics for cameras, printers, and other devices. I met my wife Julie while attending the University of Michigan and we have been married for 30 lovely years. Our son, Alex, is a software engineer and lives here in Rochester.

I grew up in the Episcopal Church and then became a member of Brighton Reformed Church when I moved to Rochester. Our family joined Messiah in 2008. Since becoming a member here, I have participated in the Worship Team, assisted in worship services, planned and led leadership and discipleship workshops, chaired the Foundation for the Future Capital Campaign, and have served as the President of the congregation for the past year. I look forward to working with Pastor Aileen and all members of our congregation to explore ways in which we can minister to our community and witness to the good news of the Gospel.

Jeffrey Ulreich – At Large

Jeffrey Ulreich is married to his wife of 22 years, Barbara and has two children, Kyra and John. He is one of the confirmation teachers at Messiah and has served 1 year as a HUB member. He is a research engineer at the University of Rochester, Laboratory for Laser Energetics, where he has been for 13 years. He obtained his BSME and MSME from RIT.

Michele Knapp – Worship

Who am I?

*Who am I that the Lord of all the earth would care to know my name, would care to feel my hurt?
Who am I that the Bright and Morning Star would choose to light the way for my ever-wandering heart?*

Still You hear me when I'm calling. Lord, You catch me when I'm falling. And You've told me who I am.

I am Yours. I am Yours.

-- Excerpt from "Who am I?" by Casting Crowns

I also am **Shelly Knapp**, a daughter of the King since age 7, and mom to three sons – Daniel (37), Timothy (33), and Jonmichael (25) and two granddaughters Marley Inez(10) and Marina Grace (1.5 months). I have a 25-year residency in Greece, a career that includes HS English teacher, part-time musician, and 30+ years as a Human Resources professional. About 12 years ago I came to Messiah with my son Jonmichael. What I found here is the meaning of worship, which is first to look **upward** (through Worship & Music Team Leader since 2015, through HUB, and prayer group), and then look **inward** (through Small Groups), and then look **outward** (Erna's Hope, God's Work Our Hands, and many other opportunities to personally respond to what God calls me to do). I am honored to remain part of the Worship Team to see God with new sight and to give Him the best of everything I have.



Tarra Hartmann – Youth and Family Faith Formation

I'm Tarra Hartmann and Faith Formation, with a focus on youth & family ministry is my game. As you can see from the action image above, our youth at Messiah have grown in their faith and thus seize any opportunity to lovingly give back to their youth group leader. In all fairness, this was a staged photo during service day at the last youth gathering in Texas.

Youth and family is my personal game as well. I am married to Jim Hartmann, occasional assisting minister, usher, greeter and emcee. We have 2 sons who grew up and started their faith journey right here at Messiah. Jimmy (24) and Johnathan (21) were both baptized, attended Sunday School, confirmation class, Messiah youth group and more. Most Sunday's you can find Jim or I sitting with my mother-in-law Essie about 3-4 rows back in the center left section of the pews at Messiah. You know we are Lutherans, as we haven't left that pew zone in over 28 years. Jim & I were married at Messiah, raised our kids at Messiah, worship with our extended family at Messiah and thus love Messiah as our church family.

Messiah will continue to amaze me because of it's you, it's people. People at Messiah have ebbed & flowed during our 28 years. But, there is one constant that never seems to change. Messiah is people who really want to live their faith in a way that extends beyond just showing up on Sunday. That amazes and inspires me to do the same, and to live that example with our young people.

So, grateful to be on this journey with you all,
Tarra Hartmann

Ellen Meyer – Adult Faith Formation

After being a member of the Lutheran Church of Concord for 40 years, I became a member of Messiah on November 1, 2018. I am retired, have two married sons, three grandchildren, and a goldfish. My family, home and church fill my life with countless blessings. I feel fortunate to be a member of such a faithful and loving church family at Messiah now.

At Concord, I have been involved in almost everything at church over the years, but my main interests involved music, faith formation (youth and adult), and service, including hospitality events and altar guild. I have been on Concord's Council many times and have served as president and secretary. I love being involved at church, working with other committed Christians to create a church community that supports and cares for all of God's creation and people.

Reggie Renz - Service/Reach Out

I came to Messiah through the merger with Lutheran Church of Concord. At Concord I served 4 terms on the Church Council, was active in Worship and Music, and took over leadership of the Transformational Ministry team when Vicar Lori finished her internship. I've also worked to coordinate the God's Work Our Hands and have recently been very active with the Backpack program. Currently I serve in Worship as a lector, communion assistant, and sing with the choir. I am married to Mark Renz, I have 4 daughters and 4 grandchildren. I am busy with dance recitals, soccer games, school concerts, birthday parties, and holiday dinners. We live in Greece where I enjoy raising vegetables, herbs, and flowers on my deck. I am retired, after 28 years, from Wegmans. Most of my time was spent in the bakery as a decorator, an artisan baker, and finally department manager.

I look forward to working with the leadership at Messiah and having the opportunity to continue some of the work that was begun at Concord. The future holds wonderful blessings and with God's help we will bring them to fruition.

Rod Speer – Property

Non-board certified Psychologist and Listener, as folks are always whispering their troubles and concerns in my ears.

I have a perpetuity for problems in The Lord House. In particular, those most notably dealing with water type issues.

Jack of all trades, Master of none...

Joanne Niemi - Stewardship

I grew up in Roseville, Minnesota and have been a Lutheran all my life. Roseville is a suburb of St. Paul. It's the home of the first ever Target and MacGyver (Richard Dean Anderson, who was a friend of my older brother). I attended Prince of Peace Lutheran Church where some of my relatives still attend. I was active in Luther League, youth group back in the day, and Young Life through my high school. I attended church camp in northern Minnesota and Young Life camp in Colorado. These experiences shaped my faith.

I was active in church as a youth, teaching Bible School to the younger kids. I was in choir and early on realized my passion involved worship and music. For umpteen years I have been the chairperson and/or on the worship and music committee. At Concord I have served on the church council several times, have been president two different times, vice president and secretary (briefly).

I enjoy helping people and interacting with them. I started out my professional life as a medical technologist at Rochester General Hospital. The lab work quickly became automated and too removed from the patient. I then decided to go to Brockport and get a Master's degree in secondary education. I taught biology and general science in the Rochester City School District for 22 years, first at Frederick Douglass Middle School and then at John Marshall High School, and loved it! It was very challenging and extremely rewarding. Many of my students have been served by Maggie Harris and Community Lutheran. A large part of my job was mentoring new teachers. I now substitute occasionally.

I am ready for a new challenge. And that is taking on the Stewardship Committee. While this gets me out of my comfort zone, I feel God has a plan. In the New Testament stewardship is defined as what it means to be a servant before Christ. It is not about money; it's about everything! How we act as devoted children of God in who, we live and move and have our being.

Cathy Coe – Communications

I am a life-long Lutheran, and have been a member of Messiah since 1992. I have a Bachelor's degree in Social Work from RIT, and an Associate's from Concordia College in Bronxville. I have worked in the home care and hospice field as well as personnel and customer service. After volunteering in Messiah's church office for several years, I was hired as the Administrative Assistant in 2010. I feel fortunate to have such a caring Messiah family.

Tom Johnson - Finance Director:

I have been a member of Messiah Lutheran Church since 2011. I'm currently serving on the HUB as the Finance and Stewardship Leader, as well as: Payroll Clerk, Men's Breakfast Planning Committee, Property Committee, Endowment Fund Committee, Capital Project Planning Team, Usher team and church golf group. I'm looking forward to using my time and talents as your Finance Director for another term. I'm married to Pastor Mary Johnson and we have four children and five grandchildren. I retired in 2011 after a 32 year career at The Dolomite Group; the last 16 years as Vice President of Operations with budgeting and purchasing responsibilities. I am now enjoying my involvement at Messiah including working on capital projects, as well as playing golf, traveling and spending time with the grandkids and our dog, Jasper.

Messiah's 2018 Statistical Highlights

Confirmed 1/1/18	371	Baptized 1/1/18	423
Confirmands	2	Child Baptisms	2
Deaths	10	Confirmands	2
Removed by Request	6	Deaths	10
		Removed by Request	6
Confirmed 12/31/18	357	Baptized 12/31/18	411
Attendance:	<u>'18</u>	<u>'17</u>	<u>'16</u>
Average	115	120	129
Easter	174	218	246
Christmas (Eve & Day)	258	255	340
		Marriages performed:	1
		Funeral or Memorial Services:	14

Our attendance numbers were affected this year by the change in worship times prior to the merger of The Lutheran Church of Concord. A number of Messiah members worshipped each week at Concord's 9 am service, decreasing our attendance here at Messiah.

The Endowment Fund

The Endowment Fund provides an opportunity to make gifts to Messiah that will provide ongoing, perpetual funding for the mission of Messiah. Gifts to the Endowment Fund establish a principle that will not be spent. Rather that principle is invested and only the earnings on the principle will be spent. It is intended that these earnings be used primarily for special needs and goals relative to the mission of Messiah. That could mean a special outreach program, a special inspirational program, a special educational program, or any other special program or project deemed important to furthering the mission of Messiah. There is, however, a stipulation in the Endowment Fund Charter that prohibits the spending of any earnings until a total principle (donations) of at least \$100,000 is achieved. As of the end of 2018, the total principle stood at \$22,240. Investments have grown the fund value to \$79,424.

The Endowment Fund is administered by a board of trustees. During 2018 the board members were Tom Johnson, Gene Ligtenberg, Tarri Mundt, Mary Sonnevile, Wayne Reabold, and Ladd Dromgold.

Nomination for a 2nd Three-year term:

Tarri Mundt:

My family joined Messiah after moving to Greece the summer of 1966, fifty-two years ago. How time flies. I have thoroughly enjoyed each and every one of those years and all of my experiences at Messiah, both in worship and the many ministries in which I have participated. Prior to joining Messiah, we had been attending Incarnate Word, which was coincidental to my continued involvement with the RAIHN ministry. In addition to RAIHN, my discipleship at Messiah has included Altar Guild, Assisting Ministers, Audit team, Communion Assistants, Coffee Hour, Counters, Crop Walk, Erna's Hope, Funeral Receptions, Hub service, Property – Cleaning/shoveling teams, Reach Out team, Service Steering Committee and Souper Saturday service. Most recently my husband, Chuck, and I have actively participated in the fundraising efforts, i.e. Christmas Tree Sale Cashiers and Garage Sale helpers, to be able to send our Youth to the National Youth Conventions. I would be very happy to serve as an Endowment Fund member for another three-year term as I continue my Messiah faith walk.

