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*Giving is built into nature.  
Almost nothing exists for its own benefit.  
Slugs feed, and in doing so, return nutrients to the soil.  
A tree produces fruit it never tastes.  
A flower gives color and scent for others, not for itself.*  
**Life continues  
because something is always being passed on.**

These are the words spoken over a video of nature scenes that a friend sent to me. A profound reflection as we journey through this season of Lent. The season of re-remembering: Re-remembering just how fragile life is; re-remembering just how valuable every breath is; re-remembering how what we give, what we do for others, is just as, if not more valuable than all the rest.

As I reflect on the path we have journeyed together in the short two and a half years I have been with Messiah, I am filled with memories of the countless cans we've labeled at Second Harvest, the acres of gardens we've weeded at Advent Lutheran, the baskets and baggies we've filled with food and treats for young and old around the holidays, and the countless dollars (okay Tim probably could count it...) we have sent to the many organizations supporting their mission of benefiting others. These memories are but a glimpse into the ways you have lived for another's benefit. But even deeper than that, these are ways you live into creation itself. For we do not exist for our own benefit, but for the benefit of others.

Too often, I think, people place too much focus in Lent on *removing* the 'distractions' that get in the way of connecting with the Divine. But if we place giving at the heart of nature, if benefiting others is built into who we are, I wonder what we can *add* to 'distract' ourselves with the Divine all around us?

Almost nothing exists for its own benefit – including you! We just celebrated Ash Wednesday with St. Paul AME, placed ashes on our forehead, and remembered we too will one day become part of the soil that feeds life all around us. A difficult, yet profound reminder which forces us to confront the question: What in our life truly matters?

*Pastor Dan's message continues on page 2*



## Why I Love the Visitation Ministry

In November 2018, I retired from my demanding job to spend more time with my mother. A stroke had taken her ability to speak and made her prone to falls and injuries. I wanted to be her companion during what I believed would be her final years. Sadly, she passed away only four months later, in February 2019, leaving me adrift in grief. That December, I saw a notice in the Messiah newsletter for Visitation Ministry Training, led by Pr. Mark Petersen and Dawn Olson. Hoping to fill the void left by my mother's death, I signed up, but less than two months later, the pandemic shut down the U.S., spending the in-person ministry.

During the pandemic, I volunteered in the Sun Prairie School District, assisting young children with online learning. However, after one bout of COVID and ten respiratory infections, I realized that working with children was too taxing on my immune system. I still deeply missed my mother. As Messiah reopened for in-person services, Pr. Mark contacted me in October 2020 about the Visitation Ministry. After attending an information session in May 2021, I felt a strong calling to the ministry. I knew I would enjoy spending time with people who missed their church community and still desired to receive communion.

In July 2021, I began visiting Rachel Templeton, a Messiah member who was homebound after undergoing a stem cell transplant for lymphoma. Rachel watches church on her phone every Sunday and adores Pastors Jeff and Dan. Our time together is precious as we watch birds from her window, talk about family and friends, reminisce about travel experiences, and share communion.

In February 2023, I began visiting Sandra Mittermeyer in her home. Sandy's husband, her lifelong companion and caregiver, had died unexpectedly, leaving her homebound and bereft. He was a biology professor who loved our earth and traveling in Germany. Sandy loves sports, especially Patrick Mahomes, and we laugh and talk about the world and our past. She supports Messiah's prairie development and is grateful for Messiah's stance on justice and inclusion.

Both of my monthly visits are life-giving. Rachel and Sandy have worked hard, raised families, and helped others—true followers of the way of Jesus. I love my visits with them and look forward to seeing them each month. The Visitation Ministry has been an important part of my spiritual life for five years now, and I am grateful to Messiah for providing this opportunity.

Mary Marshall

**Next Sacred Circle:** March 22<sup>nd</sup> between the services

If Mary's reflection has inspired you and you feel that you might be called to this important ministry, please contact Pr. Dan by emailing [pastordan@messiahchurch.com](mailto:pastordan@messiahchurch.com)



*Please Welcome New Members*

**Kyle Day**

**Jeff Nesta**

**Debra Schneider**

**Raymond & Sue Lux**

**CJ and Caley Rouse  
and their children Oliver & Elliott**

**Adam & Carrie Hinterthuer  
and their children Brynn & Maggie**

*We're Glad You Have Chosen Messiah  
as Your New Church Home!*

**Ash Wednesday and Lenten Mid-Week Soup Supper**

**Mid-Week Soup Supper and Holden Evening Prayer**

We will hold two Midweek Lenten Soup Suppers on March 11<sup>th</sup> and March 25<sup>th</sup>. After supper, we will pray Holden Evening Prayer in the Sanctuary. For those who do not know, Holden Evening Prayer is sung Evening Prayer.

Soup Supper at 6:00 PM - in the Social Hall  
Evening Prayer at 7:00 PM - in the Sanctuary

If you would like to make soup or volunteer to help at the Soup Supper, please sign up on the Kiosk.





We are eight weeks into the budget year and the Pledged Revenue received to date is \$185,100, the budget for the same time period is \$131,500, so we are \$53,600 ahead of the budget which is due to the 28 families that have completed their pledges for 2026.

Through January, General Fund expenses were \$132,900 compared to the budget of \$149,400, so we were \$16,500 under budget. The checks distributing our excess revenues from 2025 were mailed January 26<sup>th</sup>, the day after the congregation approved the distribution plan at the Congregational Meeting.

We still have 37 families, down from 45 families, that are on the old electronic giving system, Vanco. If you are an electronic giver and not receiving an email after each donation you are on the old system, please contact Tim Coulthart at [timc@messiahchurch.com](mailto:timc@messiahchurch.com) for assistance in moving to the new system.

Since the solar panels were installed, they have generated 45.7 million megawatt hours through February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Of that amount, 23.0 million megawatt hours have been exported to the electric grid, generating an electric bill reduction of \$2,386. The remaining 22.7 (45.7-23.0) million megawatt hours were used by the church.

**Tim Coulthart - Treasurer**

## Sunday Morning Adult Education

Adult Education is offered on Sunday mornings from **9:20 – 10:20 AM** between services. Grab a cup of coffee and a cookie, and join us as we explore:

### **The Parables of Jesus - Sunday, February 15<sup>th</sup> - March 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Pastor Renee Kiel will host a six-week study on the Parables of Jesus.

In this series, we will explore what parables are, how they can be interpreted, and why Jesus so often taught using these curious stories. We will also study several parables in depth, discovering their meaning and how they apply to our lives today.

Come and learn why the parables of Jesus continue to speak so powerfully to us—and be sure to bring your Bible!





About 150 people had pizza and Kings cakes, and about 35 people donned beads and masks for our concert with Ken Lonquist, the same performer who brought us the Legend of Old Befana last year.

## Goodman Center Thanksgiving Basket Collection

We continue our Lenten journey – a time of prayer, fasting, and alms-giving (the three pillars of Lent). In following these teachings, we moved the monetary collection for Thanksgiving baskets to the season of Lent.



The Goodman Center has sponsored Thanksgiving baskets for many years, last year giving away over 4,000 meals which fed about 25,000 Dane County residents!

Foil roasting pans (to cook the meal in) historically were low on the donation count, so Messiah stepped in to help provide them. Our goal has been to provide ALL 4,000 pans and Messiah met that goal and more!

Please consider donating to this cause during Lent so we can reach our goal of 4,000 pans (roughly \$5,500). If using a check, please put "Thanksgiving basket" in the memo line so it is put in the correct account. Online, please use "Thanksgiving basket" under "Funds"

This collection will end at Easter. Your donations to help feed our community at Thanksgiving are greatly appreciated!

## Hippity, Hoppity, Easter's On Its Way!



And we want to make sure it is a happy one for children and adults in our community who may be experiencing economic challenges and/or loneliness.

YOW, Sunday School and the Social Outreach Ministry are teaming up to create 250 Easter baskets for children, and 95 Easter bunny bags for adults for St. Stephen's Food Pantry, DAIS, The Road Home, the Salvation Army Family Shelter, the Extended Hands Food Pantry, Triangle Community Ministry, and to those who receive visits from the Messiah Visitation Team.

Please help us by donating chocolate eggs, jellybeans, individually wrapped nut-free candies, fruit snacks, lollipops, crayons, gum, pens, small notebooks, deodorant and lotion, decks of cards, adult word searches and coloring books.

Please visit the easel outside the office and choose the items you will purchase. You can also make a monetary donation by cash/check or online. Please note "Easter baskets" on the envelope and/or in the memo line.

Please bring all donations by March 1st. We will be packing and delivering that week.



## SAM Potluck - Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>

"Vets on Frets" is an acoustic guitar group made up of military veterans and led by **Rick Larson**. They play folk, country, and oldies. A free will CASH donation will be collected at the conclusion of the concert. They will use 100% of your donations to help other vets.

## SAM Tours Are Taking Shape

It will not be long now, and the SAM tour season will be here! SAM will again offer two tours this year. We will have the traditional kick-off to summer tour in mid-June. Can't say anything yet about the actual tour as there is a federal inspection underway at the tour site. Once the inspection is passed, it will be full steam ahead!



Since SAM did a fall-color tour last year, this year we will have a Christmas tour. Mark Wednesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, for our trip to Coloma, Wisconsin to see the **Clauson Family Christmas Show**. Both tours will sell out, so it is very important to check your SAM email.

## SAM Garden Plot at St. Stephen's

It looks very likely that SAM will have a garden plot this year at the Pheasant Hill Gardens at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church. Yes, this is the same church that Messiah raises funds in May "Mountain of Food Collection" for their food pantry.

The final deciding factor for the garden is if we have enough volunteers to maintain the vegetable garden. If you can afford a couple of hours every other week, send an email to **[SAM@messiahchurch.com](mailto:SAM@messiahchurch.com)**. All produce will be donated to the St. Stephen's Food Pantry. Labor is the deciding factor. We are counting on you!!

## Website Updates



Our **[messiahchurch.com](http://messiahchurch.com)** website is not a "static" or "stagnant" website. It is everchanging and always being updated with new information and new events. If you have not been on our website lately, please take a look. We have new headings with new information.

One example is the horizontal bar - you may notice new tabs "Who We Are", "Learn", "Serve" and "Connect". Each has dropdown names of events or group with more information about each. Each of these have information about upcoming events and photos of past events.

Coming soon... updated staff photos, photos of the church council, musicians, and nursery staff.

## Snacks Request

Kennedy needs snacks to keep all children engaged and ready to learn. For children in poverty, these calories are critical.

Please bring easy to serve individual packs of things like goldfish, fruit snacks, pretzels and cracker packs. Let's fill the Kennedy donation bin in the collection area!

## Give Kids (Families) a Lift

The school is researching a longer-term solution to the transportation challenges we have been supporting: PURCHASING THEIR OWN VAN!



This van would transport not only the children living at the family shelter, but also other children on the edge of the walking zone. It will also transport families who cannot get to evening family events or access resources in the neighborhood.

Research is happening now into the cost of the vehicle, insurance, gas and maintenance. We look forward to hearing more about this in April when Bridget, the school social worker, visits us!

## Community Meals



### **Healing House**

We will be making meals for Healing House from March 1<sup>st</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to the 7 people who signed up to make meals that week. We will have future weeks to serve as well.

### **Triangle Ministry**

**April 6th** - We will provide and serve the Easter Monday meal at Triangle Community on April 6th. Future dates for you to keep in mind or to mark on your calendar are **July 6, 2026 and October 5, 2026.**

Please check the Kiosk for sign ups as the dates come closer.

You can sign up for both of these ministries on the Kiosk or contact Elizabeth at [volunteer@messiahchurch.com](mailto:volunteer@messiahchurch.com).

## Winter Blood Drive Thank you

Thank you to those who volunteered and donated blood at our winter blood drive. If you missed giving blood this time, we have another blood drive on May 6th.



### Taking Action on Gun Violence

Thirty (30) people participated in the book study on *When Thoughts and Prayers Aren't Enough*. One action step that emerged from this study was learning how to contact our state and federal legislators. If you would like some guidance on how to do this, as well as information specific to taking action against gun violence, visit the Racial Justice webpage.

We are partnering in a Safe Gun Disposal Event on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, at St. Paul AME Church at 4525 Diamond Drive in Madison from 9 AM - noon. People can bring their unwanted guns to be dismantled and made into garden tools. Gift cards are available for those who would like to receive them. There is a forging demonstration from noon to 1:00 PM.

We need donations for the gift cards which will be in the amounts of \$100, \$150 or \$200. Any amount donated toward a gift card is appreciated! Visit Messiah's Giving tab on the website and select "Guns to Gardens" in the drop down list. We will also be collecting for the gift cards at the Ash Wednesday service and the first 3 Divine Yoga sessions on February 24<sup>th</sup>, March 3<sup>rd</sup> and March 10<sup>th</sup>.

we can  
**end gun  
violence**

## Social Justice Ministry - Human Trafficking Awareness

Our HTA webpage has a new look. If you would like to learn what legislation is being debated at the state and federal level, visit the webpage and click on the "Google doc" titled "Human Trafficking Awareness Team Call to Legislative Action." It will be periodically updated with information.

In February, we hosted a visit from Jennifer Ginsburg, the Director of Safe Harbor, about human trafficking awareness. They have seen deep impacts because of the work they do in helping victims and their families, along with continued counseling support. 400 families from a dozen counties are referred to Safe Harbor from law enforcement and the courts each year. Safe Harbor works with children and teenagers who have been victims of abuse and crimes and they go through lots of snacks and art supplies. We asked Jennifer to compile a list of these needs. Watch the weekly news for an opportunity to help fill those needs.

Jevon Diming with Pierre Outreach Services Safe House (POSSH) is currently mentoring eight women from 19-30 years of age who have earned their GED and are now in college. She is creating a short bio-documentary with participants sharing their stories with honesty and power. She is also running wellness labs to provide support for middle and high school girls and their mothers. Jevon is continuously building community partnerships, most recently with CarePortal, UW Foundation, Summit Credit Union and United Way of Dane County.



# Community Outreach Collection Schedule

## Community Outreach Team Collections for 2026

- February/March** - Goodman Thanksgiving Baskets (foil pans) & Easter Baskets
- April** - Give Kids (Families) a Lift Special Collection 2026
- May** - Mountain of Food
- June** -
- July** - Backpacks for Schools
- August** - Dignity at School
- September** -
- October/November** - Virtual Pies for "Share Your Holidays" (Second Harvest Food Bank)
- November** - Craft/Bake Sale
- November/December** - Christmas Collections for:  
The Road Home, YWCA, Triangle Ministry, East Side Community/Truax, Madison Area Jail Ministry

## A New Group for Those Who Sew or Want to Learn

### Sew to Give - Saturday, March 21st - 9:00 AM- Noon

Our goal is to encourage/teach people to sew while helping those in need. In this group, we plan to sew simple projects to donate to charity.

We are starting with Ryan's Cases. These simple pillow-cases are donated to the American Family Children's Hospital here in Madison. As the skills of the group grow, we will also make "Little Dresses For Africa" (the same group we send our Dignity Project pads to).



## Dignity Project

## Boomerang Bag Workshop

**Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**10:00 AM - 12:00 NOON**

In the  
Social Hall



## The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet

**Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**1:00 PM**



KNIT. CROCHET. PRAY.

**LOWER LEVEL  
MEETING  
ROOM**

## Dignity Project Workshop

**Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup>**  
**9:30-11:30 AM**

In the last Sunday  
School classroom  
on the right.



## Dignity Project 2026 Total

492 pads - 88 panties

## 6 Year Total

18,580 pads - 3,874 panties



The Dignity Project Team's next meeting date is March 14th. In 2025 we provided 4,000 pads and 946 pairs of underwear. We are off to a good start in January with 492 pads and 88 pairs of underwear.

The price of everything is going up, even the price of flannel which we use to make the pads. If you have any leads on places to purchase it economically or have any at home to donate, please let us know!

## Community Outreach Ministry Message

**WE ONLY COLLECT CLOTHING FOR  
KENNEDY SCHOOL**

**WE DO NOT ACCEPT CLOTHING FOR  
The Road Home and Circles of Support**

### Kennedy School Needs ►

*This is an ongoing collection.*



- Boots.
- Winter coats, snow pants (especially for PK-2nd graders),
- Waterproof mittens/gloves
- New, unopened packages of socks and underwear for boys and girls

### The Road Home

#### Wish List►



- Cleaning supplies
- Diapers
- Baby wipes
- Laundry and dish detergent
- Feminine hygiene products
- Toilet paper and paper towels
- Gift cards for gas and groceries

For sanitary and safety reasons, please note that we can only accept unopened items.

We also prefer full-sized (instead of travel-sized) items when possible.

### St. Stephen's Food Pantry Wish List ►

**Clear Soda Bottles Only**  
**(no water, green or Gatorade bottles)**

We continue to collect clear 16.9 oz. soda bottles for the St. Stephen's Food Pantry to be filled with laundry soap.

Please place them in the separate plastic bin in the collection area.

**Please be sure they are rinsed and dry.**  
**We are no longer collecting egg cartons.**

### Circles of Support Needs List►

Just Dane's Circles of Support program  
(provides a support system for individuals leaving prison)



**PLEASE NO CLOTHING**

**ITEMS LISTED BELOW SHOULD BE  
NEW AND FULL SIZE**

Laundry detergent, laundry basket, shampoo/conditioner, soap, toilet paper, towels, hand towels, washcloths, toothpaste, deodorant, razors, shaving cream, facial tissue, dish soap, kitchen towels, dish cloths and scrubbers, paper towels, garbage bags, multi-surface spray cleaners, blankets (full or queen). Please place items in the bin marked Circles of Support. **Thank you!**

### Save Your Pull Tabs

Aluminum pull tab collection to benefit The Ronald McDonald House. This includes soup, beverage, canned veggies, fruit, pet food and any other can with a ring pull tab. You can drop your tabs off at the church office or in the container on the ledge, by the window, to the Hospitality Room.

**Thank you to all who have contributed to this collection.**



# Messiah

LUTHERAN CHURCH - ELCA  
5202 Cottage Grove Rd.  
Madison WI 53716

Nonprofit Organization  
U. S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Madison, Wisconsin  
Permit No. 999

## Streamed Worship Schedule

### Saturdays

5:00 PM Evening Worship

### Sundays

8:15 AM Worship Service

10:30 AM Worship Service

You can watch services  
anytime from the "Recent  
Sermons" on our website.

### Office Hours

**Monday- Office closed**

**Tuesday - Thursday**

**8:00 AM-2:00 PM**

**Friday 8:00 AM-12:00 NOON**

## Divine Yoga Lenten Series

Grab your yoga mat or towel and join us  
**Tuesdays, March 3<sup>rd</sup> - March 31<sup>st</sup>**  
**from 6:00 -7:15 PM**

in the Community Room (upper level opposite  
end of the building from the Sanctuary.)

Divine Yoga sessions are open to all of  
Messiah and friends. The yoga sessions are  
free with an optional free-will offering to  
benefit a charity selected by the group.

On March 3<sup>rd</sup> and March 10<sup>th</sup> we will be  
collecting donations for the gift cards  
being offered at the  
Guns to Gardens  
Safe Gun Disposal  
Event happening at  
St. Paul's AME on  
March 21<sup>st</sup>.



## Ladies Lunch Bunch



ITALIAN KITCHEN

**Wednesday,**  
**March 11<sup>th</sup>**  
**at 11:30 AM**

**Olive Garden**  
4320 East Towne Blvd, Madison, WI

Please sign up on the Kiosk.

**Please be there by 11:15 AM**  
**Orders will be taken at 11:30 AM**

For questions call Claire at 920-319-6731  
or Mary at 608-716-4600

**The Ladies Lunch Bunch February  
Gathering collected \$130.00 for Goodman  
Center foil pan collection.**