

# Messiah Lutheran Church

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

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December 21, 2008  
Proclaiming GRACE  
God's Riches At Christ's Expense  
Est. January 3, 1956

*WELCOME WITH JOY AND A FEW SHORT ANNOUNCEMENTS  
RINGING OF THE BELLS AND SILENT MEDITATION*

+ Please stand as you are able for these parts of the service

*Light three candles. First candle HOPE. Second candle PEACE. Third candle JOY. Fourth candle LOVE... "God sent his Son" (Galatians 4:4)*

+ ANTIPHON OF EXPECTATION

P We celebrate our relationship with you and with one another, Lord God, made possible by a love so great that on Christmas you brought to the world your Son, so that the world would not perish but have everlasting life. (*Jn. 3:16*)

**C "You so loved the world that you gave your one and only son ... to redeem us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us." (*Jn. 3:16, Gal. 3:13*)**

P The love of God is powerful love, giving power to the beloved, empowering us to be children of God.

**C You are ... God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (*1 Pet. 2:9-10*)**

P In Jesus Christ, the Savior sent this Christmas, God offered us the power of family itself:

**C "To all who received Christ, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God." (*John 1:12*)**

P All other gods, all other temptations, all sin-fueled relationships defeat us, destroy us, take away our sense of self.

**C But the Christ Child was born in humility, eager to empower all of God's children. "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." (*John 10:10b*)**

P As John the Baptist, forerunner of Jesus, called people to repentance, so we this Advent season come repenting our sins:

**C Sins that have hurt our relationship with God and with others; sins of thought, word and deed.**

P Lord God, forgive us for not recognizing your empowering love. Forgive us for relationships that practice entitlement rather than empowerment.

**C You are an empowering God, empowering us that we might share with others an affirming, empowering love.**

Tune LBW # 26

We come in expectation a covenant foretold.

The promise of a Savior, his kingdom now unfold.  
Prepare our hearts to meet him; all nations now do greet  
him:

Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's Word!

+ ANTIPHON OF CONFESSION

P Our sins are many. Our failure to keep covenants with God and with others ... our failure to be gracious and graceful conveyors of grace.

**C Forgive us, Lord God.**

P You know the sins that separate us from you, that do harm in our relationship.

**C "Have mercy on us, O God, according to your unfailing love, according to your great compassion blot out our transgressions." (Ps. 51:1)**

P Forgive us our sins of betrayal that have hurt our relationships with others.

**C The sins of wanting to control others instead of empowering them and enabling them to be everything you have made and gifted them to be.**

P Forgive us for not using the power you give us through Word and Sacrament to serve others, to lift up the fallen, to forgive the guilty, to encourage responsibility and maturity in the weak, to enable the unable.

**C "Hide your face from our sins and blot out all our iniquities. Let us hear joy and gladness." (Ps. 51:8, 9)**

For all who do receive him, believe in him alone.  
The pow'r to be God's children to us he has made known.  
Empow'r'd through Word and Sacrament; Christ is our  
living testament:

Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's Word!

+ ANTIPHON OF ABSOLUTION

P Good News! God's empowering love is more powerful than sin.

**C God's empowering love is more powerful than death!**

P A Savior comes! Receive the words of joy and gladness: "Though you sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool." (*Is. 1:18*)

**C "For in the town of David a Savior has been born to you: He is Christ the Lord." A Savior born "not to condemn the world but to save the world." (*Lk. 2:11, Jn. 3:17*)**

P As your called and ordained pastor, it is my privilege to assure you that all of your sins -- sins that have done damage to your relationship with God and that have harmed your relationships with others -- are forgiven in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**C His coming has given us power to become children of God. Hallelujah! Amen.**

We celebrate your cov'nant of love and grace bestowed.

Christ Jesus will empow'r us; our witness will be bold.

New life and strength within us; forevermore we do  
profess:

Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's Word!

+ GREETING

P Grace and peace be with you in the name of the Triune God,  
who was, who is, and who is to come.

**C And also with you.** (*Greet one another in the pew around with the unity and peace offered through our Lord Jesus Christ.*)

+ PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come.

C With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON, Zephaniah 3

*(The prophet of old, Zephaniah, announces a Savior would come to bring redemption.)*

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has taken

away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

L The Word of the Lord     **C Thanks be to God.**

SPECIAL MUSIC BY THE CHOIR

*"We Have Come to Worship Him"*

*words and music by May Kay Beall*

+ THE GOSPEL LESSON, Luke 7

*(It is clear that Jesus is the promised Messiah. His works include empowering those around him: Blind receiving sight, lame walking, lepers receiving cleansing ...)*

The disciples of John reported all these things to him. So John summoned two of his disciples and sent them to the Lord to ask, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" When the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?'" Jesus had just then cured many people of diseases, plagues, and evil spirits, and had given sight to many who were blind. And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor

have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who put on fine clothing and live in luxury are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater than John; yet the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

P        The Gospel of the Lord.    **C        Praise to you, O Christ.**

THE CHILDREN'S MESSAGE "More Power To You!"

THEME HYMN "Stir Up"

Tune LBW # 36

Almighty God, who once called John  
To witness to your coming Son,  
Stir up your people ev'rywhere,  
And give us voice to cry, "Prepare!"

"Repent!" cried John. "Prepare the way  
For God's own Son to come today--  
The Lamb of God who sins removes,  
Whose sacrifice God's great love proves."

"Turn from your sin, turn toward this Lamb,  
The promised Seed of Abraham!  
With Spirit's fire he will baptize!  
The ax is at the root!" John cries.

Stir up your people, God, to see

Your purpose and your will that we  
May witness to your Son today  
And so prepare his holy way.

ADVENT MESSAGE "Recipes for Relationships:  
Empowerment" (Part 3)

*God is stirring up Advent with Recipes for Relationships! The coming of Christ at Christmas fulfilled God's COVENANT, commitment with humankind, promising a Savior. No such covenant would have happened without pure GRACE and mercy on God's part. Now through Word and Sacrament (the means of Grace) Christ EMPOWERS people to new life and healthy relationships.*

+ THE APOSTLES' CREED

P Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.  
**ALL I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

+ PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE  
*Response:*

P Stir up your power, O God;  
C **stir up your power and come.**

+ OFFERING IS GATHERED  
OFFERING PRAYER

P God of faithfulness, we bring before you the precious gifts of  
your creation, and with them our very lives.  
C **Teach us patience and hope as we care for those in need  
and prepare for your Son's advent into our hearts. Amen.**

### SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

+ PREFACE

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

P It is indeed right and good that we should at all times and in all  
places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father,  
almighty and everliving God. You comforted your people with the  
promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all  
things new in the day when he comes again to judge the world in  
righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and hosts of  
heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn: LSB  
# 341

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates!

Behold, the King of glory waits.

The King of kings is drawing near;

The Savior of the world is here.

Life and Salvation He doth bring;

Therefore rejoice and gladly sing.

To God the Father raise Your joyful songs of praise.

+ THE WORDS OF OUR LORD  
+ LORD'S PRAYER

+ THE INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P        Come, the table is ready.  
C        **These are God's gifts for God's people.**

#### DISTRIBUTION

*What is this Bread? What is this Wine?* At Messiah Lutheran Church, the Holy Supper of our Lord is celebrated in the confession and glad confidence that we receive "the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us Christians to eat and to drink." Our Lord welcomes to His table those who have faith in these words, "given for you" and "shed for you...for the forgiveness of sin." Please extend hand out to receive the bread. Wine is offered from the Chalice or from individual cups. Grape juice (center ring, lighter color) is offered for those who choose not to receive wine. After the Pastor follows with the Chalice, place your empty cup in the rack on the communion rail. Children not yet prepared for the Sacrament may come forward for a blessing "that, living in the covenant of their Baptism and in communion with the Church, they may lead godly lives until the day of Jesus Christ."



#### DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

**Join in singing the following selections from various resources:**

ISN'T HE?

JOHN WIMBER

BOB # 126

Isn't He beautiful? Beautiful, Isn't He? Prince of Peace, Son of God, Isn't He?

Isn't He Wonderful? Wonderful, Isn't He? Counselor, Almighty God. Isn't He, Isn't He,  
Isn't He, Isn't He?

Yes, You are beautiful! Beautiful, yes, You are! Prince of Peace, Son of God,

Yes, You are! Yes, You are, Wonderful! Wonderful, yes, You are Counselor, Almighty God.

Yes, You are, yes, You are, yes, You are, yes, You are!

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RSW #116

Love has come a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the  
Bethlehem skies.

See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; Hear how their song of joy  
arises:

Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

Love is born! Come, share in the wonder. Love is God now asleep in the  
hay.

See the glow in the eyes of his mother; What is the name her heart is  
saying?

Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers; Love! Love! Jesus,  
Immanuel.

Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and  
free.

Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are  
seeking.

Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God  
on high!

WOV #701

What feast love is offered here, what banquet come from heaven/  
What food of everlasting life, what gracious gift is given?

This, this is Christ the king, the bread come down from heaven.  
Oh, taste and see and sing! How sweet the manna given!

What light of truth is offered here, what covenant from heaven?  
What hope of everlasting life, what wondrous word is given?

This, this is Christ the king, the son come down from heaven.  
Oh, see and hear and sing! The Word of God is given!

What wine of love is offered here, what holy drink from heaven?  
What stream of everlasting life, what precious blood is given?

This, this is Christ the king, the sweetest wine of heaven.  
Oh, taste and see and sing! The Son of God is given!

+ PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P God for whom we wait, we give you thanks for this meal of life  
that you have set before us.

**C May our sharing of this heavenly food, in which you are**

**present even now, nourish our faith, strengthen us for service, and deepen our hunger for the coming of your reign on earth as in heaven. Amen.**

+ THE BLESSING

P The coming Christ is the ambassador of God's love. May our God, faithful in his promises, lavish you in his grace, empowering you to be the child already reflected in his loving, parenting eyes. In his intimate embrace you are sent from this place, bold to cultivate strong and loving relationships. Go in peace. Serve your God.

C **Amen.**

+ SENDING

BOB # 134

Jesus name above all names, beautiful Savior, glorious Lord Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word.

DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C **Thanks be to God.**

***Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7:30 pm.***

## **MESSIAH MESSENGER**

Messiah Lutheran Church, 500 Baytree Road, Valdosta, GA.

*Announcements and news for the week of December 21 – December 28, 2008*

### **EVENTS THIS WEEK**

TODAY	Sunday Classes	9:15	AM
	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent	10:30	AM

MONDAY	Choir Practice	7:30	PM
WEDNESDAY	CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE	7:30	PM
THURSDAY	Christmas Day		
SATURDAY	Baytree AA group	7:30	PM
NEXT SUNDAY	Sunday Classes will resume next Sunday, Jan 4		
	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas	10:30	AM
	Service of Lessons and Carols for Christmas		

### WE ARE DEVOTED TO OFFERING ... "God's Love, Our Response"

2008 Budget Goal	\$ 134,716.00
Goal per week	\$ 2,591.00
Goal to Date	\$ 129,550.00
Offerings for 2008 Budget – as of 12/14	\$ 140,878.00
Offering Last Sunday 12/14	\$ 2,936.00*
* inc. gifts from AA Group \$50 and Herndon Co. \$100	
Weekly average for 50 weeks	\$ 2,818.00

#### Designated Offerings:

Poinsettias	\$ 125.00
Building Fund	\$ 150.00
Organ Fund	\$ 0.00

"God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that ... having all that you need, you will abound in every good work" (2 Cor. 9: 8)

**THE ALTAR FLOWERS are a gift and a warm reminder of God's love to bloom where you are planted from Kay & George Vincent in honor of Lisa's birthday today!**

*Thanks for the gift of flowers to enhance our worship, and to glorify the Lord our God and Savior. To order flowers, please use the registry located on the stand in the hallway toward the fellowship hall.*

### WE ARE DEVOTED TO PRAYER **Acts 2: 42**

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK: Lisa Vincent (12/21) Missed *on this list?* *Please leave a note in the church office with name and birth date.*

ARMED FORCES AND THEIR FAMILIES deployed: Jeremy Christians in Korea; Dan Shannon, Kevin Sparks (Robins AFB, GA) Brian Sparks (Navy, VA) deployed to the middle east area.

#### NURSING HOME/ASSISTED LIVING PATIENTS/SHUT-INS

Rusty Hatcher at Heritage House Nursing Home  
 Otto Peterson, Advent Village, FL. Nursing Home  
 Mike Lagioia, Friendship Home

Steve Keller, chronic kidney stones  
 Vi Heidemann, heart condition

**NEW JOYS & CONCERNS:**

Charles Kluball, surgery Tuesday to remove tumors in bladder  
 Buddy Wiegand, surgery Tuesday to remove kidney stone  
 Joe Mitchell, surgery Thursday to reconstruct colon  
 Isabelle Vincent, cataract surgery postponed until 12/30  
 Nancy Stewart back surgery 12/31  
 Randall George carotid artery surgery 12/31 at Emory, Atlanta  
 Alyssia Ventura, daughter of Silke and Patrick Deeley, problems from her MS

**LIST OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

Name		Concern/joy	Requested by Relationship
Larry Ballowe	Lou Gehrig's disease	Rae Hubbard	friend's brother
June Orrison	cancer	Gloria Cook	cousin
Nancy Pieper	cancer	Lee & Sunny Schilly	friend
Belinda Judy	brain tumor	Dorothy Hauge	friend
Pr. Duane Hoyer	brain tumor	Warren Gee	friend
Kaylie Ellis (age4)	leukemia	Ellen Mitchell	friend
Gary Pasquinzo	chemo treatments	Bob Burns	uncle Mina Ark
Virginia Anderson	Alzheimer's	Betty Zipperer	sister
Mary Bennett	kidney removed	Susan Keller	friend
Roy McDanielle	lung disease	Duane Hauge	friend
Ricky Harrell	needs kidney transplant	Erin Jansen	uncle
Elizabeth Rabon	cancer	Erin Jansen	grandmother
Linda Brightwell	cancer	Tina Wright	friend/co-worker
Diane McNamara	breast cancer	Pat Simpson	niece
Trudy Sigmon	radiation treatment	Nancy Stewart	friend
Ruth Eikelberg	Rehab	Nancy Stewart	mother in MI
Dr. Bradley Woodward	cancer	Pernell Jones	friend
Maebeth Gerisch	nursing home care	Ed Gerisch	wife
Charles Todd	tests on pancreas	Dana Black	friend
Melanie McDonald	brain seizures	Mary Kichen	cousin
Peter Dotlich	colon cancer	Bo Miller	friend
Suzanne Padgett	chemo pending	Kay Vincent	coworker
Will Parker	stroke, surgery pending	Dorothy Hauge	brother-in-law
Karen Lane	tests for tumor at Mayo	Kathy Lane	Verne's daughter
Teri Williams,	complications with pregnancy		
Vickie Johnson	health issues	Dana Black	mother
Bobby Joe Johnson	health issues	Dana Black	step-father
Jamie Barnhart (25)	kidney failure	Amber O'Quinn	friend
Roger	heart issues	Linda Klement	friend
Berry Shaffii	bone marrow transplant	Linda Welch	co-worker
Donna Bramlett	undergoing tests	Dick Rockey	sister

**WE ARE DEVOTED TO WORSHIP Acts 2: 42**

Organ/Piano	Kay Vincent
Choir Director	Marjorie Fix
Reader	Linda Welch
	Jay Welch
Acolyte	Alina Sweeny
Presenter, Children's message	Nancy Sult, Tina Wright

Greeters		Janie
Nursery	Jansen	
Ushers		Warren Tinney,
	volunteers	
Altar preparation/Chancel care	Cyndy Pieplow	
Sound tech		Volunteer
Custodians		Bob & Valerie
	Behnke	
Altar linen		Fran Sparks
Flower service		Helen Whitten
Flower beds		Whitten family
Grass cutting		Fred Daniels 245-
	0483	
Floor Maintenance	Smith's Janitorials	Laverne Smith 229
	387-6060	
Church Council.....		
Kay Vincent, president		Sandy Adams, v- pres/secretary
Jan Sparks, financial secretary	Kathy Lane, treasurer	
Jeff Moxley, stewardship		Cindy Mitchell, youth
Bo Miller, worship		Vacant, evangelism
John Mitchell, property		Dana Black, Christian Ed.

## WE ARE DEVOTED TO SERVICE

	Dec 25	Dec-28	Jan 4
	Christmas Eve		
<b>Reader:</b>	N. Olsen-J Welch	N. Olsen	list
<b>Com Assist:</b>	L Welch	K. Lane	in process
<b>Acolyte:</b>	C Christians	R Spencer	
<b>Chancel:</b>	V Behnke	V Behnke	
<b>Nursery:</b>		R Schmenk	V Behnke
<b>Greeters:</b>			B Zipperer
			F Sparks
<b>Ushers:</b>		L Tinney	G Vincent
		B Miller	L Vincent
		Corey Christians	J Willis
		J Christians	B Behnke

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE, an acolyte and greeters are needed. Please use sign up sheet.

### *Mission Statement*

*A place of worship for all to know Christ, be energized by the Gospel and share Christ's love.*

### **GRACE AND PEACE BE YOURS from Pr. Richard**

Christmas greetings were sent to us by Karen Kuter Hough... "there is nothing more I would rather do than to be at church with you all on Christmas Eve... please accept this small gift (\$300) to the church this Christmastide... Economic times are tough, and I'm sure there is a need this can fill." + + + We also received greetings from Carol and Jeff

Kluball with some “snowy pictures...taken in Tomahawk” (WI) on Christmas Eve 07 of the family. + + + A letter from Rev. Richard Hart, Church Relations Committee for the V/LC Habitat for Humanity states: “I am writing to thank you for your congregation’s participation in our 2008 Building on Faith/Houses of Grace project... In total more than 290 volunteers gave over 2,300 hours to help build two houses ... both houses are 95% complete and we expect the owners will close on their homes and move in by the end of the year.”

**Last Sunday the Church held its annual meeting and:**

1. Approved purchase of property that adjoins present church property
2. Approved Budget of \$ 134,486 for 2009
3. Elected the following to serve a term on the Church Council:
  - Sandy Adams, 2<sup>nd</sup> term as VicePres/Sec
  - Cindy Sweeney, 1st term in the ministry of education
  - Dana Black, 1<sup>st</sup> term in the ministry of youth work
  - Jeff Moxley, 1<sup>st</sup> elected term in the ministry of stewardship
  - Jolleen Christians, 1<sup>st</sup> elected term in the ministry of evangelism
  - Gary Klement, Lisa Tinney, 1<sup>st</sup> elected term in the ministry of Financial Secretary



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