



# The Messenger

Messiah Lutheran Church  
228 Ramapo Valley Road, Oakland, NJ 07436  
January and February 2026 Newsletter

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## Our Mission

*A faithful, serving community, joyfully  
sharing Christ's love*

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## Messiah Staff

Pastor, Rev. Courtney Smith Westerlund  
Music Director, Bob Luderer  
Office Administrator, Ashley Henion  
Council Members: Eleanore Orman,  
Sue Boyce, Nancy Krause, Alex Boyce,  
Nick DeRoda, Joe Kurz, Michele  
Weintraub, Valerie Nicolosi

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[@MessiahOaklandNJ](https://www.facebook.com/MessiahOaklandNJ)

Sunday Worship at 10:00 am et.  
on-site, on Zoom and YouTube

## From the Pastor

Vigilant Hope  
Prophetic Peace  
Unexpected Joy  
Merciful Love  
Embodied Promise  
Courageous Defiance  
- The Will to Dream

Our Advent and Christmas theme this year provided us with an opportunity to spend time in holy longing and sacred imagination. We spent time imagining scripture coming to life while confronting despair, embodying justice, and claiming hope. Together we dreamed about a different reality, not as an escape but as a spiritual resistance.

As we enter a new year with the continued weight of the world getting heavier and heavier, I commend these themes and dreams to you. May you embody vigilant hope, prophetic peace, unexpected joy, merciful love, embodied promise, and courageous defiance. May you continue to dream and imagine a world that looks more like the kingdom of God, where all are forgiven, loved, and freed. May you seek to bring that dream into reality for all to experience and know the unconditional and boundless love of God.

Join us on January 4<sup>th</sup> to finish our celebration of the Christmas Season with Epiphany Pajama Sunday. Come in your favorite Christmas pajamas and join us for a festive worship service where we will pick Star Words to guide our congregation and our own lives for the next year.

Wishing you peace, joy, and cheer in the coming new year!

Peace,  
Pastor Courtney

## Church Council Highlights

### November

- † Day of Service on November 14th was a big success. Fifteen members came out in the morning, and we cleaned, decluttered, blew leaves, and worked on the garden. A Thrivent action card funded a delicious brunch, and we all enjoyed some well-earned fellowship. The action card was also used to purchase greens for making the Advent wreath, which will be reusable and not make a mess dropping needles.
- † Donations for 2025 from the Perzin funds totaling \$5400 have been distributed as planned.
- † The stone floor in the narthex and the altar tiles were professionally cleaned. While the final results were disappointing, there was a definite improvement.
- † To replace the current cleaning service we have been using, we will interview to hire a Ponds pantry guest to work for approximately 2 hours a week. With more frequent cleaning, the church will become easier to care for with quarterly property cleaning events that Nancy Krause and Karen Bell will be organizing.

### December

- † Our congregation participated in the Thrivent Member Northeast Network's "Carols for Cause" fundraiser and won \$5,000 for the Ponds Food Pantry. Thank you to everyone who helped spread the word and participated! The generous prize will provide important support for the food pantry and is a wonderful blessing to the community.
- † The Council approved the 2026 operating budget. While expenses are stable, we anticipate a deficit of approximately \$16,000 for both 2025 and 2026, even with support from the Perzin fund interest, dedicated accounts, and the end of our mortgage payment. Our finance team will continue to monitor these trends closely to ensure sound stewardship of our resources.
- † The Council approved a motion to use money from the Evangelism Training Dedicated Account for Sue to join the ELCA Youth Ministry Network and attend their annual conference in 2026. The Network and conference offer workshops and resources to support children, youth, and family ministry. This investment will strengthen our faith formation efforts by providing access to valuable professional development and new programming ideas for our congregation.

## What's Happening at Messiah

Epiphany Sunday Pajama Worship!  
January 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am

Property Work Day  
January 3<sup>rd</sup> and February 7<sup>th</sup>

Book Discussion at 7:00 pm on Zoom  
January 12<sup>th</sup> and February 9<sup>th</sup>

Bible Study at 12:00 pm  
January 8<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>th</sup>  
February 5<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>

Community Table at Ponds  
January 5<sup>th</sup> and February 2<sup>nd</sup>

Executive Committee  
January 13<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 am  
February date will be decided by the new committee after the Annual Meeting.

Council Meeting at 7:30 pm on Zoom  
January 20<sup>th</sup> and February 17<sup>th</sup>

Annual Meeting of the Congregation  
January 25<sup>th</sup> following worship

Holy Huddle Fellowship  
February 1<sup>st</sup> following worship

Souper Bowl Sunday Collection  
February 8<sup>th</sup> at ShopRite in Oakland

Thrivent Water "Putting it Together"  
February 15<sup>th</sup> following worship

Shrove Monday 6-8 pm  
February 16<sup>th</sup>

Ash Wednesday Worship  
February 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm

## Worship

Every Sunday at 10:00 am et. on-site, on Zoom & YouTube

### Epiphany Sunday Pajama Worship: January 4<sup>th</sup>

Join us for worship to celebrate Epiphany. You're invited to wear your festive holiday pajamas! We will once again pick Star Words during the service. If you're unable to join us and would like a word randomly selected for you, email the church office or Pastor and one will be sent to you.

In 2025 the Star Word "Justice" was chosen for our congregation on Epiphany Sunday and we spent the year looking at justice as part of our work as disciples of Christ. Look for our 2026 congregation star word after the service and see how it might guide us through this next year!

### Baptism of Our Lord Sunday: January 11<sup>th</sup>

Join us to celebrate the baptism of Jesus. During the service we will have a special remembrance of baptism to celebrate and reaffirm our own baptisms.

### Transfiguration Sunday: February 15<sup>th</sup>

#### Ash Wednesday: February 18<sup>th</sup>

Join us for worship at 7:30 pm on-site and online. During the service we will have the imposition of ashes available for anyone who would like to receive them. If you are home, you can mark the sign of the cross on your hand or head using water, oil, makeup, or you can pick up ash from church.

Ashes-to-Go will be available outside at church from 4-6pm.

### Mid-Week Lenten Worship

Stay tuned for more information regarding mid-week worship. We will focus on our Lenten theme and gather for a time of reflection, devotion, and centering. Worship will be on Zoom and YouTube each week at 7:30 pm.

### Help with Worship at Messiah

If you're interested in serving in any of the roles, please let Ashley in the office or Pastor Courtney know! We always need more people to help:

- Lay Reader: read the lessons for worship
- Assistant Minister: help with the prayers
- Communion Assistants: serve communion
- Ushers: welcome people into worship and guide them during communion
- Greeters: greet people as they enter the church
- Lay Worship Leaders: help fill in when pastor is away
- Lay Preaching/Storytelling: are you interested in sharing your story or message one week?
- Video Tech Team: help make worship online available and meaningful
- Counters: tend to the offering after worship

## Grace Poured Out: A Lenten Reflection on Water, Wine, and Oil

Do you enter Lent longing for renewal but end up feeling drained instead? *Grace Poured Out* invites you to reconnect with God through the ordinary elements that sustain life--water, wine, and oil.

Join us this Lent as we use the theme *Grace Poured Out* to guide our study and devotion. Stay tuned for more information coming in the new year.

Devotionals: *Grace Poured Out* devotionals will be available at church for all to take home. This daily devotional draws on scripture, pairing story and prayer to help you notice God's abundant grace in every moment--from washing your hands to sharing a meal. From Ash Wednesday through Easter, *Grace Poured Out* guides you toward spiritual transformation and tangible reminders of divine love.

Worship: Each week in worship our liturgy will utilize the themes and stories from the Lenten devotional *Grace Poured Out*.

Sunday Worship at 10:00 am on-site, on Zoom and YouTube

Wednesday Worship at 7:30 pm on Zoom and YouTube

Thursday Noontime Bible Study: We will gather on February 19<sup>th</sup> and March 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> to focus on Water, Wine, and Oil in relation to our Lenten Theme.

This theme comes to us from Young Clergy Women International (YCWI) who put together the devotional with Chalice Press and collaborated with Barn Geese Worship for the liturgy. YCWI is a global ecumenical network of ordained women under 40 who nurture, and equip one another for faithful, inclusive, and transformative ministry in the church and the world.

## Nominating Committee

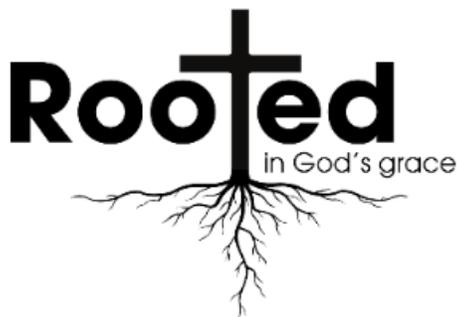
Thank you to everyone who discerned serving on the Council. We are always looking for leaders to serve in various capacities. Please consider joining a committee, helping with worship, or attending service days to help around the church. Stewardship is time and talents above anything else, and we are grateful for the ways you contribute to our church.

If you have questions or want to get more involved, talk to the Nominating Committee: Pastor Courtney, Joan Ludke, Ron Rubner, and Linda Axtell, or talk to anyone on the Council.

## Stewardship

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Day of Service on November 15<sup>th</sup>. We had a great group gather to work on cleaning up the church and getting ready for the Advent and Christmas season. Many hands make light work and we are so grateful to everyone who volunteered their time and talents.

Thank you to everyone who submitted a pledge card for 2026. As of December 23<sup>rd</sup>, we received 18 pledges totaling \$79,960. If you haven't returned your card, there's still time to consider doing so! Knowing an estimate of giving helps us be good stewards of our income and budget appropriately. We give thanks for the many ways you offer your time, talents, and treasures.



## Outreach

**Souper Bowl Sunday:** February 8<sup>th</sup>

Souper Bowl food collection at ShopRite is scheduled for Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup>. Look for volunteer sign-up coming soon.

## Angel Tree Recap

Over 40 children whose parents visit the Ponds Food Pantry will receive new clothing this Christmas thanks to the generosity of our congregation. Our Sunday School children also had a joyful time collecting donations for the Toys for Tots train in town!

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's Angel Tree Christmas collection.

## Benevolences of the Month

### Lutheran Disaster Response

Our January BOM is Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR). LDR shares God's hope, healing, and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

### St. Paul's Community Development Center (SPCDC)

Our February BOM is St. Paul's Community Development Center. SPCDC's initial objective was to improve service delivery, expand funding possibilities and increase volunteer leadership beyond the Vestry of St. Paul's Church. Today, SPCDC provides various human service programs to more than 5,000 families and individuals annually, including adult basic education, workforce development training, and affordable housing.

### \$1,040 raised for Rebuilding Together North Jersey in November

Thanks to your generous donations, we collected \$520 for Rebuilding Together. In October the Council voted to match our BOM collection with interest from the Perzin fund, which doubled the amount we were able to send!

Stay tuned for how much was collected for Global Refuge in December!

### Ponds Community Table

January 5<sup>th</sup> and February 2<sup>nd</sup>  
6-8 pm at Ponds Reformed Church

For more information talk to Michele Weintraub and follow the pantry on Instagram:

@ponds\_pantry\_communitytable

All are welcome at the table!

## Fellowship

### Book Club

The book club has been meeting via Zoom every month for exciting discussions and recaps of our readings. On January 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm, Len Nicolosi will be presenting William Faulkner's "Light in August." Be sure to join the conversation! All are welcome even if you didn't read the book. We tend to veer off into other topics. For the February 9<sup>th</sup> discussion, we will talk about "The Collected Regrets of Clover" by Mikki Brammer. On March 9<sup>th</sup> we will dive into "The Book of Longings" by Sue Monk Kidd.

Please check your local libraries to borrow the books or purchase the books for your home bookshelf. If you have any questions or suggestions for books, please talk to Valerie!

### Holy Huddle Sunday

On Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, Valerie and Len Nicolosi will once again host a "tailgating" coffee hour after worship. This is the week before the Super Bowl. Everyone is encouraged to wear their favorite team jersey, t-shirt, and fan gear. We will enjoy hot dogs, beans, and coleslaw! And maybe a few surprises too! A sign-up sheet will be posted closer to the event.

### Shrove Pancake Dinner

On Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, we will have a Shrove Pancake Dinner. The time and particulars will be determined and there will be a signup sheet in the narthex as the event gets closer. Put the date on your calendar!!

Shrove Tuesday, also known as Pancake Day, is the final day before the Christian season of Lent begins, a time for feasting and confession before a period of fasting and reflection. Its meaning comes from the word "shrive," meaning to confess sins and be absolved so it was a last chance for people to repent before Ash Wednesday. Pancakes became a traditional food as a way to use up rich ingredients like eggs, butter, and sugar before the Lenten fast.

Additionally, although Shrove Tuesday isn't mentioned in the Bible, it's the day before Lent, which is a 40 day period of fasting. Lent is said to mark the time Jesus fasted in the desert. The number '40' is significant and appears often in the Bible: Jesus fasted for 40 days in the desert.

### Coffee Hour

Please sign up for hosting a coffee hour! There is always someone available to put the coffee on for you and help with setting up. Just bring the goodies, whatever you want, cookies, cakes, bagels, anything to share! We appreciate everyone's help with cleanup. Please speak with Valerie Nicolosi if you have any questions about hosting a coffee hour.

Speaking of coffee hours, wasn't the latest Mario's Birthday coffee hour fantastic! Special thanks to Linda Axtell for getting the Sunday School children involved. The little ones are part of our congregation and add so much to worship and fellowship.

## Faith Formation

### Noontime Bible Study

Join the Thursday Adult Bible Study group on two Thursdays each month at 12:00 p.m. either on-site or on Zoom. The group is currently diving deeper into the Advent theme "The Will to Dream" and will be shifting to a Bible Study focused on our Lenten theme "Grace Poured Out"

### Adult Forum

Join us for the Adult Forum on January 11<sup>th</sup> to watch "The Chosen" season 1 episodes 2 and 3. Following the episode we will gather for pizza and discuss our thoughts. If you would like to participate in the discussion but cannot attend in person, we can set up a Zoom room to have you join us that way! Unfortunately, we cannot easily stream the episodes on Zoom but you can watch it on your own.

The show is available on Amazon Prime Video. There is also a free app you can download on your phone, tablet, or TV that will allow you to watch the show for free, you just need to set up a free account. If you need any help setting up the app or creating an account, please reach out and ask for help. Pastor Courtney is more than willing to help get you set up! Joe and Alicia, who found the app, may also be willing to help.

Download the app

here: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=net.comeandsee.thechosen&pli=1>

### Living Lutheran Magazine

*Living Lutheran* is now back in print. Copies are available at church for you to read or take home. Additionally, *Living Lutheran* offers a digest of articles online on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis. You can sign up for topics of interest for free online at [livinglutheran.org](http://livinglutheran.org)

### Thrivent Members Action Teams

A huge thank you to everyone who applied for Thrivent Action Team cards in 2025. Thanks to Thrivent we were able to have \$5,000 in extra funds for programming. It's a new year which means all of your Action Teams have reset. The \$250 seed money is invaluable to our ministry and work here at Messiah. The application is easy and we can help you out. If you have an idea for a ministry project, please let Pastor know. Action Teams can be used for Sunday School, Faith Formation, Outreach, Fellowship, or Special Event projects at church.

### Thrivent "Carols for a Cause"

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Thrivent Member Northeast Network's "Carols for a Cause." We were able to raise \$5,000 for the food pantry thanks to your hard work voting and sharing the event!

### Thrivent Water Filters

We will have our "Putting it Together" coffee hour assembling our Thrivent Water Kits on Sunday, February 15<sup>th</sup> following worship. If you are a Thrivent Member, you are eligible to obtain a water filter kit. This program pairs with Wine to Water, a global organization, bringing clean water to those in need by providing water access, filtration, sanitation, and hygiene education. By hosting a filter building event, individuals can take part in the process of building water filters used to provide households of up to ten people with clean water for ten years! Please speak with Valerie if you have any questions. Last year we put together over 50 kits – let's beat that record this coming year!

### Budget Report

The finances for this past month have been a little alarming and the Council and I wanted to bring it to the attention of the congregation. While our expenses have been a little under budget, our giving is way below budget. There has been a downward trend in giving over the past 3 years. If not for the interest from the investment account, we would be in serious trouble, but we cannot count on that forever. That interest will decrease over time as we spend the money on necessary projects around the church like repaving the driveway. I would caution everyone against thinking that since we got all this money from the Perzin house, we can decrease our normal giving. We need continuous income, not a one-time influx of cash. The Perzin gift is a way for us to do large costly projects that we would not be able to otherwise. We should not be depending on it for our day-to-day expenses since it will eventually run out.

Budget report as of November 30, 2025.

	Monthly		Year to Date	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Income	\$18,618.92	\$19,422.59	\$204,118.08	\$181,538.36
Expenses	\$19,314.27	\$21,342.58	\$212,812.22	\$192,432.52
Total	<b>(\$695.35)</b>	<b>(\$1,919.99)</b>	<b>(\$8,694.14)</b>	<b>(\$10,894.16)</b>

### Baptism Anniversary Corner

We don't always take time to remember, reflect, or celebrate the anniversary of our baptism so we are going to start including them in our newsletter. The promises made at baptism are a lifelong commitment to helping one another grow in the Christian faith and life – not just those baptized, but all those who are part of Christian community. Take time this day, week, or month to say a prayer or give thanks for your baptism.

\*Over the years many baptism dates have not been recorded or were lost in records. If your baptism date is wrong in the newsletter, it's wrong in our records! Please let us know and we will update it. If you don't know your date, we will celebrate you on either January 1<sup>st</sup> or June 1<sup>st</sup>.

### January Baptism Anniversaries

- 1 – Bea A.
- 1 – Jerri A.
- 1 – Loretta C.
- 1 – Violet E.
- 1 – Susanne H.
- 1 – Arnold L.
- 1 – Joan L.
- 1 – Ron R.
- 1 – Cheryl S.
- 7 – Hudson L.
- 8 – Kurt M.
- 10 – Oliver K.
- 12 – Nancy C.
- 20 – Rick B.
- 28 – Amy L.
- 30 – Edith B.

### February Baptism Anniversaries

- 1 – Victoria L.
- 3 – Anna R.

# January



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Dec 28 <input type="checkbox"/> First Sunday of Christmas <input type="checkbox"/> 10:00am Worship	29	30 <input type="checkbox"/> 6:30pm AA Meeting	31 <input type="checkbox"/> New Year's Eve	Jan 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New Year's Day <input type="checkbox"/> Office Closed <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Band Practice	2	3 <input type="checkbox"/> Property Work Day
4 <input type="checkbox"/> Second Sunday of Christmas <input type="checkbox"/> Epiphany Sunday <input type="checkbox"/> 10:00am Pajama Worship	5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6:00pm Community Table; Ponds Reformed Church, 341 Ramapo Valley Road, Oakland NJ 07436	6 <input type="checkbox"/> Epiphany of Our Lord <input type="checkbox"/> 6:30pm AA Meeting	7	8 <input type="checkbox"/> 12:00pm Bible Study <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Band Practice	9	10
11 <input type="checkbox"/> Baptism of Our Lord <input type="checkbox"/> 9:00am Choir Practice <input type="checkbox"/> 10:00am Worship <input type="checkbox"/> 11:15am Adult Forum	12	13 <input type="checkbox"/> 6:30pm AA Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Personnel Committee Meeting	14	15 <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Band Practice	16	17
18 <input type="checkbox"/> Second Sunday after Epiphany <input type="checkbox"/> 9:00am Choir Practice <input type="checkbox"/> 10:00am Worship	19 <input type="checkbox"/> Martin Luther King Day <input type="checkbox"/> Office Closed <input type="checkbox"/> 7:00pm Book Club	20 <input type="checkbox"/> 6:30pm AA Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Council Meeting on Zoom	21	22 <input type="checkbox"/> 12:00pm Bible Study <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Band Practice	23	24
25 <input type="checkbox"/> Third Sunday after Epiphany <input type="checkbox"/> 10:00am Worship <input type="checkbox"/> 11:15am Annual Meeting	26	27 <input type="checkbox"/> 6:30pm AA Meeting	28	29 <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Band Practice	30	31

# February



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Feb 1</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Fourth Sunday after Epiphany <input type="checkbox"/> 9:00am Choir Practice <input type="checkbox"/> 10:00am Worship	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation of Our Lord <input type="checkbox"/> 6:00pm Community Table; Ponds Reformed Church, 341 Ramapo Valley Road, Oakland NJ 07436	3 <input type="checkbox"/> 6:30pm AA Meeting	4	5 <input type="checkbox"/> 12:00pm Bible Study <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Band Practice	6	7 <input type="checkbox"/> Property Work Day
8 <input type="checkbox"/> Fifth Sunday after Epiphany <input type="checkbox"/> Souper Bowl Sunday <input type="checkbox"/> 9:00am Choir Practice <input type="checkbox"/> 10:00am Worship	9	10 <input type="checkbox"/> 6:30pm AA Meeting	11	12 <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Band Practice	13	14 <input type="checkbox"/> Valentine's Day
15 <input type="checkbox"/> Transfiguration of Our Lord / Last Sunday after Epiphany <input type="checkbox"/> 9:00am Choir Practice <input type="checkbox"/> 10:00am Worship <input type="checkbox"/> 11:15am Trivent Water Kit Assembly	16 <input type="checkbox"/> Presidents' Day <input type="checkbox"/> Office Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Shrove Monday / Mardi Gras Fellowship <input type="checkbox"/> 7:00pm Book Club	17 <input type="checkbox"/> 6:30pm AA Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Council Meeting on Zoom	18 <input type="checkbox"/> 4:00pm Ashes-to-Go <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Ash Wednesday Service	19 <input type="checkbox"/> 12:00pm Bible Study <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Band Practice	20	21
22 <input type="checkbox"/> First Sunday in Lent <input type="checkbox"/> 10:00am Worship	23	24 <input type="checkbox"/> 6:30pm AA Meeting	25 <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Lenten Worship on Zoom	26 <input type="checkbox"/> 7:30pm Band Practice	27	28

## WHERE DOES MY OFFERING GO?

### MEMBER OFFERINGS

#### CONGREGATION

NJ SYNOD

In 2025, we anticipate that members of our 143 congregations will share \$1,600,000 in Mission Support with the New Jersey Synod. This represents the largest portion of the Synod's mission spending plan (aka 'operating budget') which synod congregations voted and approved in 2024 totaling \$2,054,300. This total includes additional income from investments, grants, interest and designated gifts.

### IN 2025, YOUR MISSION SUPPORT OFFERINGS WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO:

## Grow the ELCA and MINISTRY PARTNERS



**Half of our Mission Support is shared with the ELCA Churchwide organization.** Additional ministry partners in New Jersey and our region grow as a result from the financial support offered through our gifts.



## Strengthen CONGREGATIONS



The 143 congregations served by pastors, TEEM candidates, deacons, vice-pastors, interim pastors and clergy serving congregations in retirement are provided with resources, networks and support for faith formation, stewardship, justice, multicultural ministry, discipleship, witness, and communication



## Accompany NEW and STRATEGIC MINISTRIES / COHORTS



Together we support new mission starts, strategic ministries and cohorts of learning communities practicing vitality and innovation along with *Go And...*, *Caminando Unidos en Cristo*, and *Waves of Hope*. Among these partners we count our mission initiatives in Camden, Elizabeth, Jersey City, Passaic, Secaucus, Trenton, New Brunswick, Summit and Pennsauken.



## Provide leadership for MISSION through the OFFICE OF THE BISHOP



The Bishop seeks unity in faith and common mission among the expressions of this church. Our Bishop manages the roster and the calls of leaders and candidates for ordained ministry. She strengthens our Lutheran identity and facilitates common action among communities of other faiths.



## Engage in OVERSIGHT and PLANNING for Synod Ministries



The Synod organizes lay and clergy leaders to serve on governance boards and committees that provide guidance and oversight for our ministries. We provide facilities, equipment and human resources for staff and operations of the New Jersey Synod.



Reprinted from the NEWSLETTER Newsletter

**When All Else Fails—God Reigns**

When we deliberate, God reigns;  
When we decide wisely, God reigns;  
When we decide foolishly, God reigns;  
When we serve God in humble loyalty, God reigns;  
When we serve God self-assertively, God reigns;  
When we rebel and seek to withhold our service, God reigns —  
The Alpha and the Omega, which is, and which was and which is to come, the Almighty.  
— William Temple, at the Lamberth Conference, 1930

**MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH**

*A faithful, serving community  
joyfully sharing Christ's love.*

228 Ramapo Valley Road  
Oakland, New Jersey 07436

**SUNDAY WORSHIP**

10:00 am Worship Service

**ASH WEDNSDAY WORSHIP**

4:00-6:00 pm Ashes-to-Go

7:30 pm Worship Service

In-person, live-streamed and  
posted on YouTube

