Messiah Lutheran Church
7740 Highway 72 West
Madison, Alabama 35758

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Messiah Lutheran Church (ELCA) is located at 7740 Highway 72 West, just east of Hughes Road. Sunday Services of Worship are at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Sunday School is at 9:45 a.m. A nursery attendant is provided. All are welcome. **Our website is www.mlutheran.org**. Church Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., staffed by our Office Manager. The Pastor is Rev. Scott Peterson. Pastor/Developer is Rev. Mark Borseth. The Church telephone is (256) 721-0041 email: info@mlutheran.org. For newsletter articles call Stacy Tidwell at (256) 325-5046 or email: bstidwell@knology.net.

MESSIAH LUTHERAN MESSENGER

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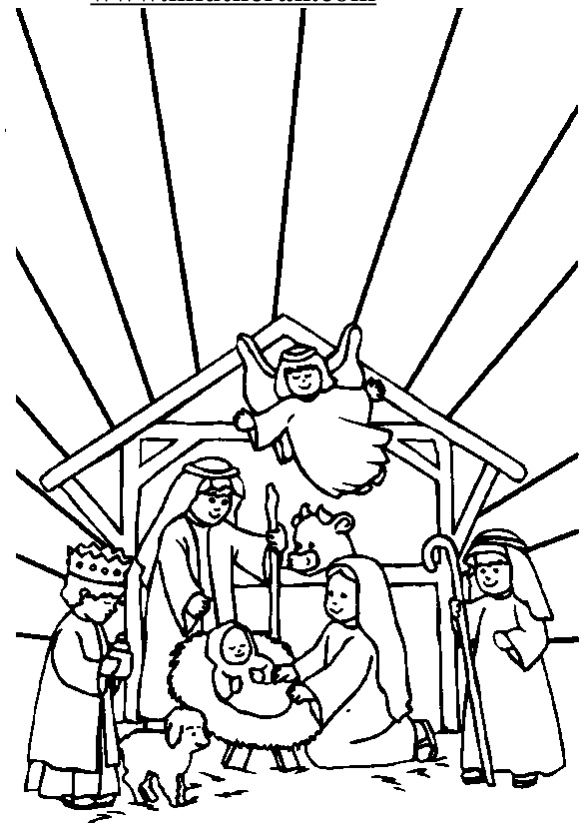

To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,
Who is the Messiah, the Lord. Luke 2:11

Sunday School Christmas Program
Wednesday, December 16, 7 p.m.

P A S T O R ' S P A G E

The Word became flesh and lived among us.
--John 1:14

Dear Friends of the Messiah who became one of us,

HOW DO YOU PICTURE John the Baptist? How do you picture the angel Gabriel announcing to Mary, "You will give birth to Jesus"? How do you picture the birth of Jesus? At our mid-week Advent services we will look at how artists have pictured these people and events that are at the heart of our faith. Artists deliver messages in their work. We will search for messages in some famous depictions of John the Baptist (Dec. 2), the Annunciation to Mary (Dec. 9), and the Nativity of Jesus (Dec. 23). (The children will present their Christmas program on Dec. 16.)

***A PICTURE** is worth a thousand words. Every picture tells a story*. Those are two old adages that speak of the power of the visual. Jesus often told stories bringing familiar (and often surprising) images to the minds of His listeners. Down through the ages the Church has used painting and sculpture as tools for handing on our Christian faith especially when the vast majority of people could not read. When we can picture someone or something we are on the pathway toward understanding.

HOW DO PEOPLE PICTURE YOU? I am not asking what appears in your mirror, but what crosses peoples' minds when they think of you. We all know people who just the thought of them makes us smile, or shake our heads, or laugh, or feel sad.

HOW ARE YOU DOING WITH YOUR SELF-PORTRAIT? Advent and Christmas are great seasons to touch up our self-portraits because this is a time of giving. We celebrate our God giving us what we most need: A Savior. We all look more godly when our hands are open to give rather than clenched to hoard or fight. Hopefully we also know that the greatest gifts we have to give are not material.

COME CELEBRATE the greatest gift ever: Jesus the Messiah, our Lord.

ADVENT SERVICES are Wed. at 7 p.m. with Holden Evening Prayer.

CHRISTMAS EVE worship with Lord's Supper will be 4, 6 and 8 p.m.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Scott Peterson

Church Council Highlights

Policies and Procedures Task Force: *"Guidelines for Completing Policies and Procedures Template", which was presented by Pat Benaker was gratefully accepted.*

Facilities Expansion Committee Report: *Pete Woods presented a report from the FEC. The Council approved the concept drawings for expanding the sanctuary and recommended Congregation approval to appoint a Building Committee to solicit more detailed drawings from an architect. These would enable obtaining more accurate bids from contractors. (This recommendation was present and approved at the congregation meeting on November 15.)*

Advent Offerings: Advent offerings to be split evenly between Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary and the Huntsville Assistance Program.

Comforters… will meet December 1, 8, 15. We will resume meeting January 5. Questions call Annette Joens. Thank you to Thrivent Financial for providing funds to help cover the cost of supplies for the quilts made this year.

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ILAG Pastor Amanda and Horacio and Abigail will be here Sunday December 20th. She will preach at both services and together they will lead an adult forum during the Sunday School hour.

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

By Mary Ann Stasiak, 325-6233

New Member Reception: Please join us in welcoming new members to Messiah on Sunday December 6 after the late service in the Fellowship Hall off the Narthex.

Elfin Magic is a great opportunity for kids to make crafts for Christmas gifts. Please join us for this fun event Sunday December 6th 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Craft supplies and helpers are still needed; contact Audrey Osterndorf.

Bridge Club will be held Friday December 11, 8 p.m. in the Parish Hall. New and experienced bridge players welcome! Bring a friend and a snack to share! Contact Mary Ann and Ed Stasiak.

OWLS Meet for Brunch: The OWLS (Older, Wiser Lutherans) will meet for brunch at Shea's Express in December. Be on the lookout for more information. Contact Jan Murphy.

Christmas Cookie/Ornament Exchange Saturday December 12, 2-4p.m. at Diane Oliver's home in Madison. Come and enjoy the fellowship; participate in either or both of the exchanges if you choose. To participate in the cookie exchange, bring one dozen cookies to share and three dozen cookies to swap. To participate in the ornament exchange, bring a wrapped ornament, $10 limit. Sign up at the Fellowship bulletin board or contact Diane Oliver.

Wednesday Night Café – Dinner is provided each Wednesday evening at 5:30 during the school year. Everyone is welcome. The cost is $3 per person with a family cap of $15. Thanks for all the help with the wonderful meals, and a special thank you to Dorothy Seitz for taking on this special ministry. We STILL need help making reminder phone calls and to help with clean up after the meals. If you can help, please call Dorothy Seitz. There will not be Wednesday Night Cafe December 23 and 30, but will resume after the New Year.

Can you help with an upcoming event? Contact Mary Ann. We need a volunteer(s) to serve as coordinator(s) of Lenten Soup Suppers on Wednesday nights through Easter

The **Rev Dr. Marcus Miller**, *President of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, will be our Guest Preacher on Sunday, Dec 6, at both services. During the Sunday School hour, he will have an Open Forum to discuss and answer questions regarding LTSS and theological education. All are encouraged to attend.*

Men's Breakfast at Incarnation Saturday Dec 12 at 7 a.m.

We continue to have great food, fellowship and discussion times at our monthly Men's Breakfasts. In December we will be meeting at Incarnation. This is open to all men from both Messiah and Incarnation (and any other men who want to come). For more information, contact Pastor Mark at pastor@incarnation-elca.org or 256-859-5155.

December Services of Worship

LBW = Lutheran Book of Worship WOV = With One Voice

Sundays at 8:30am

Dec. 6 *ELW Setting 1* with Lord's Supper
Dec. 13 *Service of Word and Prayer* - WOV
Dec. 20 *LBW Setting 1* with Lord's Supper
Dec. 27 *LBW Setting 2*

Sundays at 11:00am

Dec. 6 *LBW Setting 1*
Dec. 13 *Bread of Life* with Lord's Supper
Dec. 20 *Service of Word and Prayer* - WOV
Dec. 27 *LBW Setting 2* with Lord's Supper

Advent Services at Wednesdays at 7 pm

December 2, 9, & 23: *Holden Evening Prayer* is our liturgy with meditations on artists' depictions of John the Baptist, the Annunciation, and the Nativity of Jesus.
December 16: Children's Christmas program

Christmas Eve Services at 4pm, 6pm & 8pm

Dec. 24 Candlelight Services with the Lord's Supper

Advent Mid-Week Worship

Make plans to attend Advent services of worship at 7 pm on Wednesdays in December (see schedule above). Everyone is also invited to supper that will be served to 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. on December 2, 9, & 16. Advent offering this year will be divided between Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary and the Huntsville Assistance Program.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Candlelight Services of Worship with the Lord's Supper on Thursday, December 24, will be at 4:00pm, 6:00pm & 8:00pm.

Ring and Sing

Come out for the annual Ring and Sing on Sunday, December 13, beginning at 6:30 p.m. The concert will include music from adult, youth and children's bell and vocal groups. In addition, there will be an opportunity for the audience to ring hand chimes as Christmas carols are being sung. The concert is free. A free-will donation will benefit the Madison County library.

MLC IS CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

During services of worship on Sunday, December 20, Charter Members of Messiah Lutheran will be recognized and deceased charter members will be remembered. It was December 17, 1989, that MLC opened its Membership Charter. The Charter was closed on May 20, 1990, when MLC organized as a Congregation with 159 Charter Members. More celebrations are planned in 2010 to mark this 20th anniversary of MLC.

If you are a Charter Member and would like to contribute to the altar flowers on that day, please designate on your check or envelope "*Charter Member Flowers"* and place in the offering plate. If you have any questions please contact Beth Mumaw.

In May, we will celebrate our 20th Anniversary of organization as a Congregation. We are trying to locate all of our Charter Members to invite them to this celebration. If you know one and have a contact address, please contact Bob Loshuertos, or the Church Office.

THE MOST RECENT OPEN FORUMS…

on the ELCA's Churchwide Assembly's decision to allow ordination of those in same-sex relationships were on November 8. We especially discussed how we might respond to this decision. A consensus was reached that we should do a Bible study of applicable texts. We also want to hear from scholars who have drawn various conclusions about what the Bible says on this matter. Tentative starting date for this Bible Study is Sunday, January 10, beginning at 9:45am in the Parish Hall. I am proud of the way MLC has discussed this and also the desire to turn to the Bible as we seek answers. Blessings, *Pastor Scott*

CONGREGATION VOTES to FORM BUILDING COMMITTEE

At the Congregation Meeting on November 15, a motion passed to establish a Building Committee. (This Committee will be appointed by the Church Council.) In the motion the Congregation approved expenditures of up to $18,000 from the New Facilities Fund for detailed architectural drawings for expanding Messiah Lutheran's current sanctuary. This is not a final decision to build, but these steps are necessary to allow the possibility of enlarging the sanctuary. A proposed floor plan and an architect's rendering of the external view of the enlarged sanctuary are in the narthex.

CHRISTMAS EVE POINSETTAS

The Altar Guild will be selling Christmas Poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for the Christmas Eve Service. These flowers may be given in memory or in honor of a loved one. Just fill out the reservation form included in the Sunday Bulletin or call the church office to order yours.

Incarnation Advent & Christmas Schedule

Wednesday Theme – *Places We Expect Jesus to Show Up!*

Dec. 2 - Baptism
Dec. 9 - Holy Communion
Dec. 16 - When We Get Together
Dec. 23 – TBD - we may or may not meet.

During these Advent Wednesdays we will have a meal (donations welcome), fellowship time, and a time of worship, prayer and learning to more fully experience the presence of Jesus! Details available on our website or emailing (pastor@incarnation-elca.org) or calling 859-5155.

Christmas Worship:

Children's Program: Sunday, December 20, 10:45 worship service
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service – 7 p.m.

ON EAGLE'S WINGS

Advent Reflections - Remember to check your mailboxes or the Welcome Center for the *On Eagle's Wings* Advent Reflections.

Advent Breakfast - Enjoy a delicious breakfast on Dec. 13 while supporting the *On Eagle's Wings* mission. Breakfast will be served from 9 – 10:45 a.m. in the Parish Hall. Come before Sunday School or enjoy a hot breakfast after the early service. Donations go toward sending missionaries to teach Bible School in summer 2010 to remote and isolated areas of NW Territories and Nunavut, Canada.

Spaghetti Supper/Talent Show - The OEW Spaghetti Supper and Talent Show will be January 30. If you have a talent to share, contact Lois Graff (430-0510) or jelograff@msn.com. Enjoy an evening of good food and good fun that will support our mission to the children and communities in the NW Territories of Canada.

OUTREACH NEWS from Claire Strand

New Members will be received at the late worship service on Dec 6. A reception of celebration will be held in the Fellowship Hall following the service.

Community Outreach - Thanks to all who donated food for the food pantry or blankets for the North AL Coalition for the Homeless. Christmas is coming and the children at the Downtown Rescue Mission are excited and hoping for presents. This is our chance to help make a child's Christmas happier. A Christmas tree will go up after Thanksgiving to "adopt" these children. We will collect presents until the middle of December. Thank you for your support.

God's blessings on your Advent, as we await the greatest Gift of all. --Jacquie Fry

LIFE PASSAGES This newsletter feature announces significant transitions in the life of our community of faith. Birth, Death, Baptism, Graduation, Confirmation, Job Change Relocation, Engagement, Marriage, or any other life passage you would like announced will be included. Contact Outreach Assistant, Claire Strand.

DEATHS: *Remember I am with you always to the end of the age Matthew 28:20*

- Jacquie Fry's father, Ralph Behrens, died October 30.
- Dagmar Miller's mother, Eva Krauthoefer, died November 11.

Incarnation Information December 2009

We have now been worshiping on Sunday mornings for a little over two months. So how are things going?

- Pretty much everything we have needed for our building or for worship has been donated. God has been faithful!
- We have had good worship where people have sensed the presence of God. God has been faithful!
- We have 50 people on a typical Sunday. Of course we would like to have more, but we have a wonderful group of gifted people (including many children). God has been faithful!

Of course there are needs. We are still spending more than we are taking in each month, but the gap is getting smaller. We have a small group of people doing most of the work, but one by one new people are stepping up. It is exciting to see people who were too intimidated to offer their talents at larger churches stepping forward in our smaller setting. There is a place for the excellence that comes with a large congregation, but there is also a place for the opportunities to grow and serve available at a smaller congregation.

About the time you receive this newsletter we expect to be having a building full of people celebrating Thanksgiving together. We have several people from Incarnation and Messiah who are planning to come, and we are handing out flyers in several of the closest neighborhoods in an effort to be a welcoming place where people can have a "family" to join with and celebrate the holiday with good food and fellowship.

Much of the energy right now is going into doing what needs to be done for the building and worship, but we hope to be getting into the community more regularly over the next months. The reason we are called Incarnation is that we want to make a difference outside the building seven days a week and not just in the building for an hour on Sundays. If you have any ideas for ministries or activities that can get us into Harvest-Monrovia community, let us know. We also want our building to serve the whole community. If you know of groups that serve the community that need a place to meet, send them our direction.

We are thankful for your prayers, love, support, donations and involvement in this new ministry. Please continue to visit us for worship, ask how we are doing and how you can pray for us, find out if there is a way to donate your time or talents or finances to help us. We are excited to be doing what we are doing. The Harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Please pray that God would continue to send out workers into the Harvest, and be open to say "yes" if the answer to your prayer for more workers at Incarnation is you!

Check out our newly enhanced and updated website (Incarnation-elca.org) for more information!

Education News

Celynn Ballard, celynn.ballard@knology.net

SUNDAY SCHOOL

This year's Christmas program will be on Wed., December 16 at 7 p.m. Practice will be held on the following Sundays and Wednesdays.

* Sundays, December 6 & 13--9:45a.m
* Wednesdays, December 2 & 9

Adult Sunday School Classes:

- Room 12 - *"The Life of Meaning: Reflections on Faith, Doubt, and Repairing the World"* with Bonnie Jane Peterson
- Room 11 - The book of Genesis Bible study with Dottie Hanson.
- Parish Hall - Pastor's Bible study on that Sunday's assigned texts

Youth News

SENIOR YOUTH

- The Sr. Youth went on a canoeing trip on October 11.
- On November 15 the Sr. and Jr. Youth attended Grace Lutheran's Christmas. Activities included icing cookies for soldiers, making gifts to supplement Meals on Wheels, and wrapping shoeboxes filled with Christmas gifts for needy children.
- The Incarnation youth invited the Sr. Youth at Messiah to a ski retreat at Lutheridge Jan 15-18 for youth in grades 6-12. A commitment is needed by December 13. Cost for lodging and meals is $145. Lift tickets are $37/day, ski rental is $14/day, snowboard rental is $20/day, and lunch at the ski resort is $7/day. If you want to register or get more info, contact Brandon.

All 9th – 12th graders are welcome at any or all Sr. Youth activities. Contact John Shriver for information.

JUNIOR YOUTH…The Jr. Youth is still in need of leadership. If you are interested, contact Celynn Ballard.

TWEENS

On Nov 15th the Tweens wrapped and assembled about 40 gift boxes for Operation Christmas Child. The kids had lots of fun and we will be able to track some of the boxes to see where in the world they go! A BIG Thank You to all the parents who helped out. This is a great service project but requires lots of adult supervision. Also *Thank You* to all the members who donated boxes and toys. All 3rd-5th graders are welcome and encouraged to meet with us once a month for fun and fellowship.

CRADLE ROLL Thanks to Beth Gloe for volunteering to coordinate the Cradle Roll program and Judy Lindsey who will assist her. We really appreciate your service to Messiah.

DECEMBER 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 10 am Comforters *Mike & Sue Doubleday,"Kari"*	**2** 5:00 pm Confirmation 5:30 pm Wed Night Café 6:00 pm Children's Choirs 6:30 pm Youth Ensemble 6:00 pm Notabella Choir **7:00 Advent Worship** 7:45 pm Adult Choir *Robin Douglass*	**3** *Frazier Douglass*	**4** *Douglas Drahota*	**5** *Bob and Karin Duncan*
6 **8:30am Worship:** **ELW 1 w/LS** **9:45 Sunday School** **11:00am Worship:** **LBW Setting 1** **12 New Member Recept.** **12:15 Instrumental Ensemble** **2:00-4:00 Elfin Magic**	**7** *William & Marcie Emerson*	**8** 10 am Comforters *Rebecca Englert*	**9** 5:00 pm Confirmation 5:30 pm Wed Night Café 6:00 pm Children's Choirs 6:30 pm Youth Ensemble 6:00 pm Notabella Choir **7:00 Advent Worship** 7:45 pm Adult Choir *Jon Erler*	**10** 8:30am Morning Study Group Church Council 7pm *Dave & Judee Erwin*	**11** 8:00 pm Bridge Club *Ronald &Pat Esteppe "Kaitlyn"*	**12** 7:00 am Men's Breakfast at Incarnation 2:00-4:00 Christmas Cookie Exchange *Thomas & Lisa Fedrick, "Ryan"*
13 **8:30am Worship** **WOV Serv. Word/Prayer** **9-10:45 Advent Breakfast** **9:45 Sunday School** **11:00am Worship** **Bread of Life w/LS** **6:30 Ring & Sing**	**14** *Randall Fields*	**15** 10 am Comforters *Jeff & Bonnie Flowers, "Anna"*	**16** 5 pm Confirmation 5:30 pm Wed Night Café 6:00 pm Children's Choirs 6:30 pm Youth Ensemble **7:00 Advent Worship & Sunday School Christmas Program** 7:45 pm Adult Choir *William & Shirley Forbes*	**17** 8:30am Morning Study Group *Larry and Terry Frakes*	**18** *Dennis & Jacquie Fry*	**19** *Eugene & Edith Frye*
20 *Pastor Amanda & Horacio Castillo and Abigail* **8:30am Worship** **LBW Setting 1 w/LS** **9:45 Sunday School** **11:00am Worship** **WOV Serv. Word/Prayer**	**21** *Catherine Frye "Kendall"*	**22** *Gary Garrison*	**23** NO Confirmation or Choirs No Dinner – Holiday Break **7:00 Advent Worship** *Chris & Beth Gloe "Samantha"*	**24** **4, 6 & 8 pm Christmas Eve Worship Service** *Ian & Heidi Goebel*	**25** Merry Christmas! Christ the King is Born! *Jeff & Lois Graff*	**26** *Ken & Nancy Grnat "Lori"*
27 **8:30am Worship** **LBW Setting 2** **NO Sunday School** **11:00am Worship** **LBW Setting 2 w/LS**	**28** *Dee Dee Grimes "Winston"*	**29** *Mark & Patricia Grimes "Joe"*	**30** NO Confirmation or Choirs No Dinner – Holiday Break *Robin Grubis*	**31** *Richard Grulich*		***JANUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 16***