



MESSIAH
lutheran church

1706 Lee Boulevard
North Mankato, MN
507-387-5537

messiahnorthmankato.com

Sharing the love of Jesus

**September
2025**

- A Message from LaDonna Thomas -

Dear Beloved People of Messiah,

If you've ever helped your parents or a sibling downsize their household or if you've had to clean out their house after their death, you know that you find all kinds of interesting things they have saved over the years. One thing that is sometimes found in a dusty box in the corner of the attic is a box of letters - love letters. They are from the days when your loved one was courting or being courted. Sometimes those relationships had to survive distances created by war, a job in another state, or attending college. From those letters, we learn a lot about the multi-dimensional nature of their relationship. Those love letters kept the relationship alive and growing when the two could not be in each other's presence.

I like to think of the Bible as God's love letters to generations of people who have and continue to live in relationship with the Holy One. From the pages of Holy Scripture we learn how God's relationship with people and all of creation is sustained and grows over time. We hear again and again in a multitude of different ways the depth and breadth of God's love and grace. When we hear and study the stories that have formed the Judeo-Christian faith, God's story becomes our story.



Every time we gather for worship, we read from the Bible. We get to listen in on God's love letters to the world God created. What is read from the Bible in Lutheran worship is usually determined the Revised Common Lectionary (a schedule of readings), which was put together in the 1980's by a commission that included representatives from 20 main-line denominations. That lectionary has four assigned readings for each Sunday: a reading from the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament), a Psalm, a reading from a New Testament letter, and a reading from one of the Gospels.

One of the gifts of the common lectionary is people in main-line Christian churches all hear the same Scriptures from week to week. That means that you and your Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal and UCC friends are all hearing the same scriptures readings when you attend your individual churches each week. This has served to unify the Christian Church throughout the world.

One of the challenges of the common lectionary, though, is the connections between the four readings is not always obvious. And, sometimes, it seems as though we are hearing snippets of scriptures from here and there. What's often missing is the context of the readings and the thread that connects the scriptures together. And quite honestly, sometimes the readings are random and there is no thread that connected them.

About 15 years ago, a team of professors from Luther Seminary in St. Paul put together a new schedule of readings called The Narrative Lectionary. This four-year cycle of readings begins in September and continues through May of each year. Each year begins in the first book of the Bible, Genesis, and continues with one reading from the Hebrew Scriptures each week until Christmas. Then the weekly reading moves to one of the Gospels and follows the life of Christ.

One of the gifts of this new lectionary is that, over time, it allows hearers to get a sense of the bigger picture of the Bible and the thread of God's love and grace that holds all of it together. Biblical stories are presented in their larger context, which helps us understand and apply them to our lives. This new lectionary also allows us to take time to become more familiar with parts of the Bible we might not know as well - like the Hebrew Scriptures.

Our congregation council has decided to give this new lectionary a try, beginning on September 7th. One of the big changes you will notice is that the lectionary has only one reading for each Sunday (instead of four). And that reading will be a little bit longer than we may be used to, so that we can get a sense of its context. Our hope is that as we spend the year in this new lectionary, we might grow in our understanding of how the whole Bible fits together and how God's story is our story - a series of love letters from God.

See you in worship! God's peace and joy,
Pastor LaDonna



Mankato Pride Parade and Worship

The Pride Community **worship is Saturday, September 6th at 9:30 am** at First Presbyterian Church of Mankato. Members of several churches in Mankato are also joining together to walk in the Mankato **Pride Parade on Saturday, September 6th**. Together we will offer a unified Christian witness of love, acceptance, and inclusion of our lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) siblings, many of whom are part of our own families and faith communities. You are invited to join Pastor LaDonna to walk in the parade. Please sign up in the narthex or call the church office to indicate your interest.

Messiah Senior Lunch—September 9th

You are cordially invited to attend the Messiah Church Senior Lunch on **Tuesday, September 9th, 11:30 am** at Olive Garden. We hope you will join us for tasty food, good conversation, and a fun event. Both men and women are encouraged to come. We have a reservation. Please check the Olive Garden web site for their lunch menu and new monthly specials. Georgia Holmes will be the host.

Interested in Membership at Messiah?

Pastor LaDonna will host a dessert and coffee/tea on Thursday, September 11th at 6:30 pm at the church. This will be a time to get acquainted, learn more about our church, and answer questions you may have. Please contact the church office if you plan to attend.

Choir Opportunities

The choir will rehearse at 6:30 pm on **Wednesday, September 17th and 24th**. We will share this music at the 10:00 am Messiah Worships United on Sunday, September 28th, as well as Sunday, October 26th at 2:00 pm at the “Piano Passion & More” event at Messiah.



God’s Work. Our Hands. Sunday—September 28th at 10:00 am

We come together in a Messiah Worships United service at 10:00 a.m. to celebrate the amazing and great things God is doing through our hands. We will bless and dedicate:

- *the supplemental school supplies we are collecting through the months of September (more details below)
- *prayer shawls

Following worship we will gather for a lunch to celebrate the conclusion of the “ask” phase of our “Paving The Way Capital” campaign, your generosity, hear updates about the maintenance projects and dream a bit about what God might want to do next through our ministry.

We are showing our support for our North Mankato teachers by collecting these supplemental supplies they often run out of and have to purchase out of their own funds:

Drop off supplies in the big wicker baskets in the narthex until September 28th.

Collect the following: Sticky back Velcro tape, Sharpies (fine point & regular), white board markers, Ticonderoga pencils, pocket folders, Command strips for posters, stickers for kids.



Adopt-a-Hwy—October 5th

Please consider walking road ditches with your Messiah family and consider bringing along a friend or two! This is a great way to show our stewardship efforts toward improving our land and water.

We will gather in the church's east parking lot at noon for instructions. Vests and bags will be provided. We'll go out to our section of Highway 14 on **Sunday, October 5th** for about 2 hours. It works great if we get about 20 walkers. A meal will be provided to each worker from Big Dog after we walk. The Fellowship and Recreation Team will cover the cost of your meal.

Please email Lynell at lynellsenden@hotmail.com OR text her at 507.380.1483 with your interest and how many will be participating. Families are invited! NOTE: walkers MUST be ages 12 and up.

WHAT TO WEAR/BRING: long pants and sleeves, gloves, closed-toe shoes, hat/sunglasses, water bottle, sunscreen



Vaccination Time—October 5th

Cub Foods professionals will administer flu and COVID vaccines between worships on October 5th from 9:00 am-12:00 pm so come early or stay late to get your "shot". Vaccines are available for anyone ages 6 or older. For both vaccines, please bring your insurance card or Medicare card including Part D.

Piano Passion & MORE

Continuing the tradition of Cindy Rupp and Noah Wilson performing on the "88", we've added some more of Messiah's talents for an afternoon delight.

We will serve treats after the concert for social time.

Tickets available in the church office: Adults—\$20, 13-18 year olds—\$10, Children 12 and under—Free

All proceeds will go towards future Capital Improvements.

Messiah Kids & Club Messiah Fall Updates

Registration is now open for Preschool – 5th grade. For the 2025-26 school year, these groups of children will meet on **Wednesday evenings**. Parents and children are welcome to join in Wednesday dinner from 5:30-6:00 pm; join in a short 30 minute worship from 6:00-6:30 pm; then send their kiddos off with the classroom teachers from 6:30-7:00 pm. Parents are welcome to stay and socialize with other parents while waiting for class time to finish. Register here: <https://forms.gle/nk92vC4MdTugwDq37>

Middle School Ministries (MSM)

Middle School Ministries for 6th, 7th and 8th graders will begin with an orientation for parents and students on Wednesday, September 10th at 6:30 pm. The full Wednesday evening schedule begins on September 17th:

5:30 pm—meal

6:00 pm—worship

6:30-7:30 pm—large group & small group class time

Registration now open — <https://forms.gle/TyeJerTi7yRGqANF9>

Worship on Wednesdays

All are invited to join us Wednesdays beginning September 17th as we worship with Pastor LaDonna. Worship is from 6:00-6:30 pm. Feel free to stop in before worship from 5:30-6:00 for a bite to eat as well, as we offer a free will offering meal. This is a great opportunity for those who are busy on Sundays and/or those who only have time for a shorter worship. Holy communion is celebrated each week and offering trays are available in the narthex.

After worship, enjoy adult conversation as some parents wait for their students to finish faith formation classes.

Wednesday Bible Study

Wednesday morning bible study is back this fall, starting Wednesday, September 10th at 9:00 am. This group meets weekly and joins in watching a video and having conversation with new and old friends. Look for more information in the coming weeks regarding a revamp of this bible study concept.

Thursday Men's Bible Study

This weekly bible study meets at 7:30 am Thursday mornings at Happy Chef. Enjoy a tasty breakfast and conversation about the upcoming Sunday's scriptures. This is a great way to get to know others from Messiah and grow in faith and understanding together.

GATHER



For adults of all ages seeking more social interaction

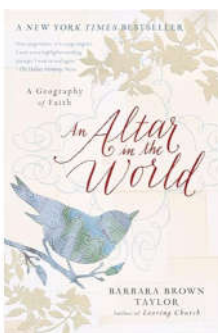
Join us weekly on Wednesdays at 10:30 for coffee

Stay for a free will offering lunch

If you need a ride, contact the church office.

Please sign up weekly in the Narthex or call the church office, so we can plan for lunch.

Congregational Book Read—Coming Fall 2025



Join our congregational book read featuring An Altar in the World by Barbara Brown Taylor. In this NYT bestseller, Taylor shares how she learned to find God beyond the church walls; embracing the sacred as a natural part of everyday life and shows us how to discover altars everywhere we go.

Books are available at no charge in the narthex starting in September. Please sign out a copy on the provided form. This is a great chance to connect with members of our congregation and strengthen relationships. Small group study options will be organized at a meeting on Sunday, October 12th at 9:30 am between services—come join us as we launch this new book. Joining a small group is optional—you're welcome to read along with us on your own.

A special thank you to the Endowment fund for sponsoring this endeavor by purchasing the books.

COUNCIL UPDATES

2025 council members: Janet Jones, Nate Brekke, Jean Zandstra, Katie Hendrickson, Dustin Runkle, Swede Mundell, Julie Olsen and Greg Suskovic.

Our July tithes and offerings were down significantly from June, yet our income and expenses for the year are even. Income YTD 2025 is \$209,309 with expenses at \$209,343. Income YTD 2024 was \$190,330 vs. expenses of \$201,080. Therefore, our giving is \$19,000 above last year while expenses are \$8,000 higher. This is encouraging as we go through our summer slow time for giving and anticipate a wonderful fall season, and the generous response to our Capital Campaign.

Church Council met on July 23rd and the following was discussed:

- The Paving the Way campaign has raised over \$208,000 and is entering the implementation phase. Parking lots are scheduled for repair and seal coating in August, and skylight work is underway. HVAC installation is planned for the fall, ideally between seasonal temperature changes. Again, we are thankful for Messiah's commitment to this deferred maintenance project.
 - On Sunday, September 28, we will celebrate God's Work – Our Hands Sunday with a worships united service at 10:00 am, a blessing of school supplies, and a lunch to celebrate our capital campaign progress.
 - Greg and Sarah Suskovic donated a portable speaker with two microphones, available for group use in the building and can be borrowed from the conference room.
 - We still need musicians for Wednesday night worship this fall. If you know anyone with keyboard, guitar, or vocal skills, please contact Pastor LaDonna at the church office.
 - Piano, Passion and More will be October 26, at 2:00 pm and help support our capital improvement fund.
 - A Messiah constitution update is planned soon.
- The next council meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 15th at 6:30 pm. -

Ways to Give Online

1. Scan this QR code:
 2. or Visit our website at messiahnorthmankato.com
- > Click "OFFERING" on the home-page, or go to the "GIVING" tab
> Choose the amount you'd like to give and the frequency (e.g. one-time, weekly, monthly)
> Make donations by using a credit or debit card, or by using your bank account. Know your gift is appreciated and helps support the ministry of Messiah.



Change in Messiah Communication

Scan the QR code or click link to stay informed of Messiah news and events. If you previously received our "What's Up" email, you will need to "opt" in to receive the new weekly message. Guests are invited to sign-up as well.

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sl/mb3YWRp/messiah>



Special Thanks

To all those who have helped all summer to keep the lawn and gardens of Messiah so beautiful ... Thank YOU! Throughout the summer we hear so many comments about how pretty and well groomed our space is. Volunteers come out each week in the heat and humidity to make this happen. What special time and talents to share with this community.



September—October Worship Participants and Communion Assistants

Please look through the entire calendar for the dates you have been scheduled.

If you are unable to serve as scheduled please call the church office (387-5537) or Linda Wenkel (345-6180) to identify a substitute or get help finding a substitute. Thank you!

8:30 Worship

- 9/7** **Ushers:** Greg Guyer & Ron Leiferman
 Reader: Sarah Suskovic
 Comm: Deb Leiferman & Elaine Fossen
- 9/14** **Ushers:** Greg Guyer & Ron Leiferman
 Reader: Renee Guyer
 Comm: Breah Hendrickson & Linda Wenkel
- 9/21** **Ushers:** Les Altenburg & Scott Madigan
 Reader: Kim Henrickson
 Comm: Amy & Jeremy Soost
- 9/28** **Worship United**
 at 10:00 am

10:30 Worship

- Chuck Rafferty & Frank Steichen
Shirley Rosenau
Cindy & Bob Rothenbuehler
- Chuck Rafferty & Frank Steichen
Dee Nolan
Lisa Benson & Marlene Buker
- Dave Dahl & Jim Jilek
Joan Klanderud
Phyllis & Peter Skadahl
- Ushers:** Dave Dahl & Jim Jilek
Reader: Diane Halvorson
Comm: Jane & Paul Zwieg

8:30 Worship

- 10/5** **Ushers:** Kim Henrickson & Kyle Vogt
 Reader: Linda Wenkel
 Comm: Renee & Greg Guyer
- 10/12** **Ushers:** Kim Henrickson & Kyle Vogt
 Reader: Georgia Holmes
 Comm: Marilyn Hanson & Al Narveson
- 10/19** **Ushers:** Jeremy Soost & Steve Jones
 Reader: Amy Soost
 Comm: Kathy & Carl Fitzloff
- 10/26** **Ushers:** Jeremy Soost & Steve Jones
 Reader: Janet Jones
 Comm: Sylvia & Scott Norman

10:30 Worship

- Karla Elmore & Karen Walrath
Jeff Pribyl
Deb & Frank Steichen
- Karla Elmore & Karen Walrath
Shirley Rosenau
Jodi & Mark Himmer
- Bob Rothenbuehler & Tim Hatlestad
Sandy Hatlestad
Karna & Doug Stock
- Bob Rothenbuehler & Tim Hatlestad
Eva Borneke
Betty & Chuck Rafferty

September 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 OFFICE CLOSED	2 1:30 pm Staff Meeting	3 10:30 GATHER & Lunch	4 10:00 am Visitation for Brian Novak 11:00 am Funeral	5	6
7 8:30 am Traditional Worship (FB Live) 10:30 am Contemporary Worship	8 9:00 am SAIL Group 10:30 am Social Outreach Meeting 6:00 pm Scout Meeting	9 11:30 am Monthly Lunchers 1:30 pm Staff Meeting 6:30 pm New Member Mtg	10 9:00 am Bible Study 10:30 GATHER & Lunch 6:30 pm MSM Parent & Student Orientation	11 7:30 am Men's Bible Study 9:00 am SAIL Group	12	13
14 8:30 am Traditional Worship (FB Live) 10:30 am Contemporary Worship	15 9:00 am SAIL Group 6:00 pm Scout Meeting 6:30 pm Council Meeting	16 12:00 pm Worship Team 1:30 pm Staff Meeting	17 9:00 am Bible Study 10:30 GATHER & Lunch 5:30 pm Wednesday Supper 6:00 pm Worship 6:30-7:00 pm Messiah Kids 6:30-7:00 pm Club Messiah 6:30-7:30 pm MSM Classes 6:30 pm Choir Practice	18 7:30 am Men's Bible Study 9:00 am SAIL Group	19	20
21 8:30 am Traditional Worship (FB Live) 10:30 am Contemporary Worship	22 9:00 am SAIL Group	23 1:30 pm Staff Meeting	24 9:00 am Bible Study 10:30 GATHER & Lunch 5:30 pm Wednesday Supper 6:00 pm Worship 6:30-7:00 pm Messiah Kids 6:30-7:00 pm Club Messiah 6:30-7:30 pm MSM Classes 6:30 pm Choir Practice	25 7:30 am Men's Bible Study 9:00 am SAIL Group	26	27
28 10:00 am Worship United (FB Live) <i>God's work. Our Hands. Congregational Project</i> 11:00 am Pave the Way Celebration Luncheon	29 9:00 am SAIL Group	30 1:30 pm Staff Meeting	27 9:00 am Bible Study 10:30 GATHER & Lunch 5:30 pm Wednesday Supper 6:00 pm Worship 6:30-7:00 pm Messiah Kids 6:30-7:30 pm MSM Classes 6:30 pm Choir Practice	28 7:30 am Men's Bible Study 9:00 am SAIL Group	29	30



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Amy Malvin, Office Manager: Messiah@MessiahNorthMankato.com

Label

www.messiahnorthmankato.com



“Sharing the Love of Jesus...”

PRAYER list

Thoughts & Prayers: Brooke, Lisa, Greg, Dave, Milo, Clara, Maddie & Baby, Briana, Steve, Chelsea, Sandy, David, Bernie

Continued Thoughts & Prayers: Craig, Earl, Linda, Patty, Neal, Lowell, Emma, Peggy, Heather, Mollie, Carolyn, Bonnie, Elle, Brian, Barb, Carl

Prayers for Those Who Serve Our Country: Carley, Alex, Tyler, Cole

Prayers for the asylum-seeking family the Mankato Area ELCA churches are supporting.

Prayers of sympathy for Margaret Novak and family on the death of her husband, Brian.



Fall Worship Times and Office Hours

The office will be closed on Labor Day Monday, September 1st.

Fall hours start on Tuesday, September 2nd and will be Monday—Friday, 8:30 am—4:30 pm.

Fall worship schedule begins Sunday, September 7th with traditional at 8:30 am and contemporary at 10:30 am.

Sunday, September 28th is “God’s Work. Our Hands” day and we will worship united at 10:00 am with a service project (see article within to learn more about this project) and Capital Campaign celebration luncheon to follow.