



The Messiah
Messenger

Messiah Lutheran Church, Holt, MI
Published Monthly

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Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

Thank you to everyone who made our Advent and Christmas celebrations such wonderful events to share the joy of the season with everyone. There is so much work that goes on behind the scenes by so many dedicated volunteers that to name them would take up several pages. I'll just touch on a few in the following sentences: The Altar Guild who is always busy changing the sanctuary over from Thanksgiving, to Advent, to Christmas, to New Years this time of year. The Sunday School teachers, pageant directors, administrators, and all others who make sure our kids experience the real meaning of the season and present us with such blessings as the "Snap-Shots" Christmas Story. Finally, all the others who bake cookies, set-up and take down tables, shovel and salt sidewalks, and just do all the many other things that bless each one of us. To all of you, THANK YOU!

Well, 2012 is supposed to be the end of the world according to the Mayan calendar. My favorite take on that is if they could predict the end of the world, wouldn't you think they could have foreseen the extinction of their own civilization? There will be, and always have been "predictors" of the end of the world who claim to know more than the one who as John said in his gospel "*Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made*" who Himself told us that "*of that day and hour no man knows, not even the Son of Man*". If Jesus, the creator of all things, speaking in His state of humility was willing to trust all things to His Father, so should we. Which means, we go on doing the work He has given us to do, being faithful to be found working to "Seek the Lost & Grow the Found" until He comes!

As we look then to the future, I want to share information with all of you from the Lansing Area Lutheran High School steering committee that I am a part of. The news is exciting, and brings all sorts of possibilities to the future. Below are some excerpts from our meetings:

Greetings in the name of Jesus our Savior and Lord,

As you may have already heard, 7 Lansing-area LCMS congregations have formed a steering committee to investigate the possibility of establishing a local, regional Lutheran high school. As the first step in the process, the steering committee contracted with Charles A. Winterstein to conduct a 6-week Exploratory Phase to determine if there was enough support to move on to an in-depth Feasibility Study. During the study, 16 local LCMS pastors & administrators were interviewed to determine the level of support. A synopsis of counsel's report to our Steering Committee at our meeting on December 8, 2011 follows:

"The pastoral & administrator surveys indicated that there is a high commitment supporting Lutheran education... Lay leadership strength was rated above average... congregational stewardship was gauged to be average... The availability of community student prospects is substantial, indicating that if a new school is established, it will need to focus on outreach into the community. The overall potential for developing a new Lutheran high school is a distinct possibility & support among the pastors & administrators is above average. It is the opinion of counsel that there is sufficient data that would support further study of a new Lutheran high school association in the Lansing area."

Based on our discussions regarding the results of the exploratory investigation, the Steering Committee is prepared to move forward to the next phase: a 6-8 month in-depth Feasibility Study. This study will cost an approximate \$700 per congregation to fund and should be completed by early fall 2012. Between now and our next meeting on January 31, 2012, the Steering Committee is asking for your input and prayers. Please reach out to your church representative (listed below) and give us your thoughts and input.

God's blessings,

Tracey Johnson
Committee Chairwoman
Good Shepherd Lansing

Lloyd Conway
Treasurer
Our Savior Lansing

David Bremer
Committee Member
St. Peter Riley

Herman Arends
Secretary
First Lutheran Charlotte

Pastor Steve Grafe
Committee Member
Messiah Holt

David Harns
Committee Member
St. Matthew Holt

Bob Filter
Committee Member
St. Luke Haslett

The greatest news to come out of the Exploratory Phase is that there is a new spirit of harmony and cooperation among all the area churches. All of us realize we are in this mission together, all of us dependant upon one another, all of us moving forward in a spirit of reconciliation and unity.

There will be much work as we move toward the completion of the Feasibility Phase of the project, input from the Lansing community, detailed interviews with the area churches including Messiah. But, the future of a dedicated area Lutheran High School Association is becoming more a possibility than a dream.

More information will be shared as we move along together in 2012.

Happy New Year to you all,
Pastor Steve

Greetings from the Elders...

The Elders pray that you had a blessed Christmas. The Christmas Story, the birth of our Savior fills us with wonder each year. The story remains the same, but somehow God uses it to refresh our faith in the Promise each year.

The Elder Survey is complete. We would like to thank you for sharing your thoughts with us. Each and every answer is in the results. The views shared provided us with a lot of "food for thought." Our January meeting agenda is to review the survey, and incorporate these ideas and views into our activities and responsibilities. Other boards are also being asked to review the survey, and implement changes appropriate to that board.

If you try to add up the numbers in the survey, you will find they do not add up. Some surveys gave one answer to each question. In many cases, multiple answers were given on some questions, but not other questions. We included each and every response. So the numbers shown on the survey only give a general trend of the answers.

Elder Meetings are open to any member of Messiah. We would like to welcome each of you to attend a meeting. You can attend to find out what we do, or, offer your ideas and thoughts about the Elders or Messiah.

Please contact any of the elders at any time for any need or concern.

In HIS service,
Ernie Schuette

The survey, compiled and formatted by the Elders, can be found beginning on page 13.

Membership Activity

Dearly Departed

December 2, 2011

Edward Noss

The Rite of Holy Baptism

November 27, 2011

A. Lockwood



Dear Messiah Family,

I want to thank all of you for your thoughts and prayers. My mom's passing was quite quick but I am thankful that I was with her in her last moments.

Thank you again for your support.

Larry Porter

To my Messiah Family,

Thanks to all of you that sent a card or said a kind word to me regarding the loss of my Dad. He is no longer suffering and is in the arms of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, where no harm can come to him. I know with your support and love, as I have felt so strongly these past couple of weeks, I will get through this difficult time.

Thank you,
Marty Noss

Highlights from the December PPC Meeting

- November PPC meeting minutes approved
- MCDC Christmas Program well attended
- Dave Wingert is the new Chairman for the Board of Planned Giving
- Ernie Schuette presented a summary of the Board of Elders congregation survey
- Discussion was held on the proposed Governance Board

Volunteer of the Month:

Jo Ellen Miskowski

Jo Ellen grew up in Lansing and attended Everett High School. She has an associate's degree in Computer Programming/Data Processing from Lansing Community College, and a bachelor's degree in business administration from Michigan State. She retired from the Ingham Intermediate School District after 35 years in technology, 17 years as the Information Technology Director. She currently works part-time as an educational consultant for Convergent Technology Partners with 23 school districts in central Michigan.

Jo Ellen met her husband Rich in 1981 while they were both out for an evening of dancing in East Lansing. They married in 1983 and purchased a home in Holt in 1986, at which time Jo Ellen and Christine transferred from Trinity Lutheran in Lansing to Messiah. Rich started attending with them and became a member the year Christine was confirmed. The family moved to Mason in 2001.

Jo Ellen was active in Messiah's Women's Guild, serving at various times as president, secretary, treasurer, and chairman of the kitchen committee. She has been a reader since Messiah started using lay readers, and was involved in VBS for many years while Christine was growing up. Jo Ellen has served as the congregational secretary at voters' meetings and PPC meetings for the past ten years. She recently became the webmaster for Messiah's website. She was a member and/or chairman of the Board of Stewardship at one time, and worked at both the Lugnuts games and Messiah's fish dinners. Whew!

Jo Ellen accepted the position of project coordinator for the 2011 and 2012 Forts & Sorts servant events, at which she was

pleased to have the assistance of her daughter, Christine, who holds a master's degree in apparel design and fashion merchandising and is currently the manager of the White House Black Market women's retail store in Holland, MI.

Jo Ellen is a current board member and chair of the Architectural Control Committee and Treasurer for her subdivision homeowners' association. In 2011, she received the International Society for Technology in Education "Making IT Happen" Award for being a leader in innovation and commitment to educational technology in K-12 education. She has held just about every leadership position in the Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning.

Jo Ellen enjoys attending Bible studies, gardening, scrap booking, making jewelry, friends and family, and, of course...technology.



Change in Crossways' plans!

The new Crossways class **will begin in September 2012, not January.** Further information to follow in the spring.

Questions? Call Cyndy Wulff at 517-646-8891.

Electronic Giving: You Can Do It!

Is one of your New Year's resolutions to better heed God's call to be a faithful giver? One way to achieve that goal is to set up an electronic debit system for your offerings. It only takes a few minutes, and it reaps benefits for you and for Messiah:

- No more trying to "make up" for the weeks you were on vacation or couldn't come to worship.
- No more driving into the parking lot and realizing you left your offering at home.
- No more trying to explain to God why you have a better use for your offering this week.

Some people are uncomfortable with placing just their yellow card in the offering basket. No problem--just write on your envelope, "I gave electronically," and place it in the basket. You will want a set of envelopes anyway to use for non-Sundays, such as Lent and Holy Week.

Toward the back of this newsletter is the form that needs to be filled out to get your electronic offerings started. You can elect to have your debit made weekly, twice a month, or monthly, and you will need to attach a voided check to the form. Once you have completed the form, please place it in the financial secretary's box or turn it in or mail it to the church office.

Please prayerfully consider whether electronic giving would be compatible with your lifestyle and your faith walk. For those who are already participating in this program, take some time to consider whether the amount you are giving back to God is still in line with the blessings He has continued to give you.

-- Board of Stewardship

News from the Senior Youth

I would like to first and foremost introduce myself to the congregation. My name is Melissa Winkel and I am the new Senior Youth leader. I have been attending Messiah as long as I can remember and appreciate the faith the congregation has put in me to work with these great kids. We are off to a slow but steady start and I am finally getting the hang of things.

We have decided to dive back into the 10 Commandments lesson previously done during Sunday School. The youth enjoyed it so much the first time around they decided they would like to do it again. This should give them a great opportunity to learn something new they may have missed the first time through.

On December 10th, four Senior Youth (2 members and 2 friends) and I all went to Youth Haven ranch along with some of the junior youth. We spent a good part of the morning picking up sticks and debris left over from some of the fall storms we had. We ended the day by transporting all of the donated gifts to the room where, later that evening, the Youth Haven kids would be coming for a party to receive their Christmas presents.

We are still meeting every Monday night at 7:00 pm in the youth room for any Senior Youth that would like to attend. There is no Bible study in the evening just fellowship. So far, we have hung out and played games for most of the night.

If you would like more information on what is planned for Senior Youth please email me at melissawinkel@gmail.com

God Bless!
Melissa Winkel

Parent Corner

By: Jackie Lack

This month the Board of Education is returning to an area of information Rhoda Hunter began a few months ago. As an elementary school teacher, her heart has been to serve the children and their parents. The ideas she presented were simple, but spot on, when helping parents guide their children to grow in their faith and worship of their Lord. I will be attempting to continue by using various resources throughout the year.

To begin, where else but on our knees? This may sound self-centered, but consider praying for yourself in your role as a parent now and in the future. I will list several areas for which you could pray, along with a Bible passage for reference. Perhaps you would chose to pick one point a month to bring before the Lord. This is not an all-inclusive list, but it will give you some ideas as to where to begin.

Pray...

1. That I will be convicted of any personal hypocrisy lived out before my children, contradicting what I say by what I do. (Matthew 7:3-6)
2. That my words, looks, and actions, will reflect to my children that my spouse is honored, loved, and cherished. (Proverbs 31:10-12)
3. That I will recognize individual limitations of my children and have realistic expectations of each. (Colossians 3:21)
4. That I will never be too tired, angry, or negligent to discipline my children wisely. (Proverbs 29:17)

5. That I will not spoil my children with too many possessions nor too few expectations or responsibilities. (Psalm 37:16)
6. That I will resist the temptation of popularity for my children and be willing for our family to be different from the world's standards. (Psalm 37)
7. That I will be generous in expressing appreciation and approval while holding back reminders about their past failures and mistakes (Psalm 76:38-39)
8. That I will know when to step in and take charge of a situation and when to step back and let my children learn for themselves. (Proverbs 16:9)
9. That prayer will be my immediate response to family joys and crises alike (Ephesians 6:18)
10. That I daily remember my own need to be taught by God's Word and filled with His Spirit so I reflect the joy of the Lord to my children. (Psalm 16:11)

More Thanks....

I would like to thank everyone for their prayers during my recent hospital stay. Also, a thank you to all those who visited me, sent cards, food and telephone calls. My recovery is coming along nicely.

Len Lueder

Our family wants to thank all of you who were so kind to remember us this past Christmas season with cards, letters, pictures, and gifts. Your continued generosity is a blessing to all of us.

Pastor Steve, Sarah, Nate, and family

Messiah's Women Conferences for 2012

Ladies~

We have exciting conferences coming up this year! This is a time for you to meet and bond with Christian women from Messiah, Holt, and other communities. We laugh, sing, cry, praise God, and spend quality time with each other. Please mark your calendars to join us for at least one of these events:

1) Saturday, February 4th, at 10:00 a.m. A Women of Faith Conference Kickoff with a Soup & Salad luncheon at Cindy Armstrong's home. Cost is FREE! Come and learn what the Women of Faith Conferences are all about, with a DVD viewing of a previous conference and personal testimonials. Several leaders for this year's Women of Faith Conference in August will be joining us. A sign up sheet will soon be on the Women's Ministry bulletin board.

2) Thursday-Friday, May 17-18th. Win-Some Women Retreat at Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island. Keynote speaker Patsy Clairmont. More info can be found at www.win-somewomen.org/ Reserve your spot early as seats are limited.

3) Friday-Saturday, August 24-25th. Women of Faith Conference in Indianapolis, IN. Costs is only \$160.00 for your tickets and bus transportation. Lodging will be approximately \$45.00/person. A \$50.00 deposit holds your spot! Scholarships are also available.

If you have any questions about any of these events, please contact Cindy Armstrong at 517-694-1562 or armstrongcl@comcast.net.

Christmas Poinsettias



***Thank you to all
those who purchased poinsettias for the
altar and made the sanctuary so beautiful
for Christmas!***

Anonymous – In thanksgiving for my Prayer Pal, Julie Day

Betty Bonney and family – In memory of Dad, Dianne, Terry, June and Loren

Chris & Mike Gilliland – In memory of her mother, Donna, and father-in-law, Russ

The Guilfoyle family – In memory of Jeff's parents

Lora Hitchcock – In memory of her husband, Bob

Steve & Peggy Jenkins

Monica Jennings – In memory of her husband and parents

Sondra Klepper – In memory of Mom, "miss her"

Randy & Debi Kelbert – In memory of Debi's father, Jim Rose

Len and Pat Lueder – In thanksgiving

Jeff & Colleen McDonald – In memory of Brian McDonald, Jack and Connie Murphy

Sherry Mileski – In memory of family and friends

Phyllis Monroe – In memory of her husband and parents

Terry & Jackie Roberts – In honor of our parents and Brian McDonald

Gary & Julie Smith – In memory of their parents and grandparents

Sally & Sherri Terbush – In memory father and husband

Mike & Lynn Wagner – In thanksgiving

Paul & Bonny Weishar

Betty Zietlow – In memory of her husband and parents

Education excitement for 2012!

The Board was busy last month with the Sunday School's annual Christmas program. Many thanks for all the hard work by the Sunday school teachers, the children, Vicki Pinkney, and Krista Ried . The program was wonderful!

New classes will be starting up this month. The kick-off for the women's ministry Bible study "Jesus, the One and Only" by Beth Moore will be January 29th from 2-4:00 pm. The ladies will receive their material for the study and view the introductory lesson so it is important to attend. This will be 10-weeks in length including the introductory lesson.

The men will also kick-off their 4-week study of "Joseph" that same day from 2-3:00 pm. Men will pick up their materials and discuss what to expect for the next 4 weeks.

Pastor continues his Sunday morning Bible study. So please plan on attending after fellowship time.

Fellowship time continues this year between services. The Saturday morning Bible study sets up the tables and chairs for it every Saturday morning and has been preparing the coffee, as well. The Board of Ed has been the primary supplier of the goodies. The intent from the beginning was to share the responsibility among the congregation. There is a sign-up sheet on the board next to the flower sign up board. All you are responsible for is bringing in the goodies. Individuals can sign up for a special occasion or not, a Board, a committee, advertising for a new project in the church. It could be for no reason at all, just to share some yummys with your fellow members. The entire 2012 year is open so you can pick the date that is important to you!

Also on the board is a pocket with small slips of paper. If you have a question, a concern, just need to know something, please grab one, fill it out, and place it in the pocket. The Board will review them and get them to the source of the answer so you can get an answer. If you want them to contact you personally, leave your name. If you don't sign your name, we will make the answer known at the next fellowship time to those in attendance. We are trying to help keep the lines of communication open for everyone. Any questions about the Fellowship time please see any one of the Board of Education members.

Also, beginning this month, watch for an area in the Messenger called Parent Corner. I will be offering suggestions from various sources to help parents be the best Christian parents they can be. The Board has heard a lot of requests for guidance and resources in this area. Rhoda Hunter had begun it a few months ago and had provided some wonderful tips. Hope this helps parents!

This month's Board member spotlight is Maggie Schultz. Maggie has been a member of Messiah for longer than she can remember, but she knows her children were toddlers and they are adults on their own now! She has her degrees from MSU and is a registered dietitian. She works at Barry Eaton District Health Department. She has been married to Mark for 32 years and has two children, Rich and Paula. Maggie is involved most specifically on the Board in the area of adult Bible study. She is currently organizing Messiah's first ever blood drive to be held later this year. She is also researching the Lutheran stance on fasting to make available for the membership before the beginning of Lent. Maggie has also offered to revisit the organization of the Messiah "library" to make known what is

available to the congregation as well as to be able to loan to other congregations to reduce costs to them as well as us. Thanks Maggie for joining the Board and bringing some more fresh ideas!

Finally, I would like to close with informing you I have stepped down from the Board of Education as of the end of December due only to my new job demands. It has been an honor and privilege to serve with such an enthusiastic board that has worked hard to put together an exciting year of activities, Bible studies, and events for all ages. Jim Jelenek has, in addition to being co-superintendent of the Sunday school, agreed to be the chairman. Thank you, Jim for stepping forward! Thank you Board for always focusing on Messiah's mission of "Seek the Lost and Grow the Found".

Jackie Lack



***Study kicking-off Sunday, January 29, 2012 from
2-4:00 p.m.***

In *Jesus, the One and Only*, Beth Moore introduces you to an intimate God in an up-close and personal portrait of the life of Jesus the Messiah.

This is far more than just a work on the life of Christ. *Jesus, the One and Only* is a romance, and you are invited to become part of it. As He has done in the past, God will use Beth's words to woo you into falling in love with Jesus of Nazareth.

Come to know Christ personally. Watch and listen as He breaks up a funeral by raising the dead, confronts conniving religious leaders of His day, teaches on a Galilean hillside, or walks on the waves and calms the storm. Like a ragtag band of followers nearly two thousand years ago, you will not be the same.

AUTHORIZATION FORM

Messiah Lutheran Church

M13505

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	ENVELOPE/DONOR #	DATE
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Effective date of authorization: _____		
Type of Authorization Form:		
<input type="checkbox"/> New Authorization	<input type="checkbox"/> Change banking information	
<input type="checkbox"/> Change donation amount	<input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue electronic donation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Change donation date		
Last Name _____		First Name _____
Address _____		
City _____		State _____ Zip _____
Email Address _____		
Please debit my donation from my (check one):		Routing Number: _____ <small>Valid Routing # must start with 0, 1, 2, or 3</small>
<input type="checkbox"/> Checking Account (attach a voided check below)		Account Number: _____ <small>ACCOUNT TYPE: <input type="checkbox"/> Checking <input type="checkbox"/> Savings <input type="checkbox"/> Other</small>
<input type="checkbox"/> Savings Account (contact your financial institution for Routing #)		
DATE OF FIRST DONATION: ____/____/____	FREQUENCY OF DONATION: (check only one)	FUNDS AND AMOUNTS:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly on Mondays	<input type="checkbox"/> General/Operating \$ _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Semi-monthly on the 1 st and 15 th	<input type="checkbox"/> Building \$ _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 1 st	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ \$ _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 15 th	Total \$ _____
AGREEMENT		
I authorize the Messiahs Church and Vantage Services, LLC to process debit charges to my account. I understand that this authority will remain in effect until I provide reasonable notification to terminate the authorization.		
Authorized Signatures: _____		Date: _____

Please attach voided check here.

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Fall 2011 Elder Survey

(Based on 61 replies)



Which worship service do you like best, and why?

8:30 - 22
 11:00 36
 Monday 7:00 10

Like Traditional - 9	11:00 Like the contemporary music - 13
8:30 best fits what we do - 7	11:00 best fits what we do - 10
Would like more popular traditional – Hymns - 1	Monday 7:00: it’s the music - 5

What do you like best about Messiah? Why?

Friendly and caring people – 50	Congregation is a good size - 5
Pastor preaches the truth, sincere, great sermons - 17	Good location close to home – 5
Holds with Tradition - 2	Variety of Bible Study Opportunities 4
Run well most of the time	Variety of activities 3
Communion every service	Younger family activities
Youth Haven Trips	Not too formal service format
A variety of ways to serve God	Elderly are included in activities
Day Care	In reach and Outreach focus
Great Fellowship	Feels like a family

In what area of our ministry do you see the most need? Explain.

DCE – Expansion of Youth Programs -19	More Bible Studies 4
Something for college age youth - 3	Events for Sr’s to do during the day – Pot Luck and cards after on Wed. - 3
Contact with those members not coming to Church - 2	Evangelism / Outreach - 3
Communication / transparency 3	Adult Singles 2
Children’s Sermon, need more 2	Adult Choir & MC2 Choir
For members to open themselves and their hearts up for others	More members need to be involved in church activities
Getting adults to see the need for Bible Study	Enhance the fellowship program
Spiritual leadership among our leaders	Several Options of Bible Studies between services
New members feeling welcome, and acclimated	Too many people having their own agendas
Men’s Ministry	Reunion for confirmands
Techno Ministry (Record services on DVD/Web & audio for members in need)	Being more of a presence in the community
Breaking down the walls – Unity	Sometimes I’d like to pull up to the door & have someone else park my car
	Everything seems to be going well
	8:30 Service Music

What would you like improved at Messiah?

<p>Youth Programs / DCE - 12 More members participating in activities 2 Provide more Bible Studies 2 Always wear name tags: helpful for new members and friendly for visitors Improving Leadership in all the Boards Sr Youth take part in 1 service per month Service greeting is a little chaotic, needs new timing. It makes me uncomfortable More positive affirmation of the good instead of dwelling on the negative (more like heaven!) Unity No church for young children, just Sunday School; 2 plus hours too long for child. Too many people feeding "rumors" Correcting our problems Stop all the back biting We need to get along with each other</p>	<p>Communication - 5 Conflict resolution 2 More contact by elders More Classrooms Communicate openly and honestly. Stop the behind the scenes drama Sometimes feels like those working at church are operating under a magnifying glass, with others too willing to criticize Music Need a Choir A "Ladies Aid", socialize, prayer, activities type of group A Sat. evening service 9 yr olds and younger not in church, but in Sunday school Use the hymnal instead of so much technology Meet and greet at start or end of service</p>
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What do you expect of your Elder?

<p>Keep in contact with families – 16 Someone you could share your thoughts with about issues at church – 5 Be more visible in greeting people before and after church 3 Every Elder should be in some form of Bible Study 2 Help people to meet each other To support Pastor Steve in where he feels the Lord is leading Messiah To be involved in worship on a regular basis Be a mediator when needed Faithful attendance in worship and Bible studies Ask me to help when help is needed.</p>	<p>To be there when needed in emergency -12 Be a positive, spiritual role model – 5 Make an effort to get to know me - 5 To provide Spiritual Support/advice - 3 Set a good example as a leader 2 To hold me accountable, to notice if I am sliding or struggling. To work with members who have stopped attending church To be more involved at Messiah. To learn to be Elders Doing a good job To be friendly To pray for us Visit us in the hospital Act as a go-between with Pastor Steve</p>
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If you had a concern about something at church, would you feel comfortable bringing it to Pastor Steve's attention, or to your elder's attention? If no, would you please explain why?

Yes – 47 (Several surveys missed this and several other questions on the second page of the survey)

He is easy to talk with 3 Friendly, but forceful Friendly Absolutely! Great Sermons He is doing a great job! Be more friendly	I like Pastor saying our names at Communion Yes for personal issues, no for church related issues I really like Pastor Steve, but don't know much about him
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Study kicking-off Sunday, January 29, 2012 from 2-3:00 p.m.

Joseph: Carpenter of Steel

By: Rev. Greg Seltz

The man driving the Christmas story in this **Men's NetWork** Bible study is none other than Joseph, the foster-father of Jesus. Come along as host Rev. Greg Seltz, Speaker for **The Lutheran Hour**, sheds light on one of the New Testament's true unsung heroes in *Joseph: Carpenter of Steel*. Adding historical perspective to this study is scholar and best-selling author Dr. Paul L. Maier.

Joseph is a man appointed by God to do extraordinary things. Written by LHM's Theological Editor and Writer Pastor Wayne Palmer, this four-part study examines the fascinating life and times of this New Testament "average Joe" in rich and absorbing detail. "In researching and writing this Bible study my respect and admiration for our Savior's foster-father has grown amazingly," Palmer said.

It might be hard to swallow that your betrothed is with child-and by the Holy Spirit no less. But that would be only the first of many things Joseph would have to deal with. Beyond that bombshell, there was the inconvenient trek to Bethlehem with the pregnant Mary to fulfill the census, finding a suitable place for the baby to be born, later trekking down to Egypt to escape Herod's homicidal directive and, finally, the no-little matter of raising the Son of God!

Enhancing this Bible study are more than 50 Internet links. These provide historical and cultural details on things like Augustus' census, the birthplace of Jesus, the wise men, the lunacy of Herod the Great, extra-biblical stories about Joseph, the question of Jesus' brothers and sisters, and more