



# Messiah Messenger



*The Newsletter from Messiah Church E.C.C.*

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## The Vision of Mission...with Pastor Bob

Almost every organization being formed or restructured these days begins with a Vision and Mission Statement. It makes sense to clarify purpose and to evaluate proposed activities to the primary goals of the group defined by such statements. In a very real sense, we at Messiah Church, believe that there is only one church with a shared vision and mission statement: The Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

*“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”* Matthew 22:37-39

*“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded to you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”* Matthew 28:19-20

So even though we are a separate, free standing congregation, we exist to fulfill the mandate given to the whole church. For this reason, every effort to share the good news of Jesus Christ is a part of our concern.

As a congregation, we have an opportunity and a responsibility to support the “work of the kingdom of God” both globally and locally. Knowing that we can’t significantly support everything financially, spiritually or emotionally, we make the best choices we can, often based on relationships we have developed over the years.

Being part of a larger church, the Evangelical Covenant Church (E.C.C.), has increased our connections globally and locally, without limiting our participation to this group alone. Echoing the statement of John Wesley

that the “world is my parish.” We are currently taking advantage of opportunities to partner in the work of the gospel in:

Congo and the Sudan (through the E.C.C.)  
 Turkey (through Carol Schenk)  
 Nigeria (through Pastor Ekpo)  
 Uganda (through Joshua Ouwor)  
 India (through Pastor Daniels)  
 Japan (through Don & Amy Johnson)  
 Russia (through Bruce Inglis)  
 Puerto Rico (through Robert Young)  
 Bangladesh (through Tom Sartor)  
 China (through Wisdom Springs)  
 As well as some smaller short term works.

Locally, we are involved in helping start new churches as well as ministries of compassion such as:

Covenant Community Care Health Clinic  
 Birthright Crisis Pregnancy Center  
 Local Bible Camps:  
 Wildwood, Bair Lake, Center Lake, Portage Lake  
 Neighborhood Outreaches:  
 Living Arts (with Chris and Christine Blunden)  
 Bezalel Project (with Yvette Rock)  
 Family of God (with Sue Hatcher)  
 Here’s Life Inner City (with Terry Robinson)  
 Youth for Christ (with Dale Bishop)  
 Christ in the Cass Corridor (with James Sims)  
 Arab Neighborhood Christian Outreach (with Scott & Joe Ellen Cherry)  
 Detroit Metro:  
 Navigators (with Gary and Judy Bayer)  
 Congregation Beth Messiah (with Harold and Grace Brickner)

It sounds like a lot for a one group to be a part of when we list it, but we know our effort is a modest one and we hope to be able to continually do more to spread

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the good news of Jesus Christ, in word and deed, throughout our neighborhood, nation and world.

It is healthy for us as a congregation to share this vision and mission of the whole church of Jesus Christ and to give more of ourselves in increasing measure to that which motivates the heart of God. At the very least, let's commit ourselves this year to pray for these mission works, and learn what we can about them. Following are two of these mission works we support worldwide.

In service, with you, to the Great Commission,

Pastor Bob

### **Wisdom Springs (China)**

This year, Messiah will sponsor a mission in China, Wisdom Springs.

For the major part of her adult life, Stacey Hayes has lived in Beijing, China, where she is an independent missionary working with street children ages 10-18. Currently, she has 37 children living with her and is trying to establish a permanent safe haven in an old chili factory south of the city where they can "safely" get an education and develop skills to better their lives.

These are children who have been sold into bondage to a "boss" by their families. They come from extremely poor rural villages and are brought into the cities to wash cars from 5:00 p.m. until 3:00 a.m. outside bars and restaurants for tips. If they do not return to the "boss" daily, with any money, they are beaten, raped, and sometimes even worse.

Over the years, Stacey and her small dedicated staff have developed a school, provided these children with food and shelter, bathing facilities, and helped many to turn their life around. She has ministered from many different small locations but the numbers of children who need help are multiplying.

The children are being taught Mandarin (since their language is a village dialect), English, computer skills, mathematics, geography, leadership skills, and an appreciation for their own culture. Stacey's goal is to provide them with the opportunity to get a high school education so they can go on to the university if they choose. This is a step-by-step process in development.

A first goal is to convert the old chili factory into the Wisdom Springs Technical Training Center.

Another major goal is to provide the children with enough education and skills so they can go back to their home villages to teach other children and, hopefully, earn a living and spread the good news of the gospel.

Just recently, Stacey shared a story of celebrating the Chinese New Year with several of her students. At this time of year in China, everyone returns to their homes to celebrate the biggest holiday of the year. The campuses are deserted, migrant workers lay down their tools and the trains are full of passengers traveling back home. Most of "Stacey's kids" went home except for the 10 youngest, because they didn't have much to go home to. These kids are around 10 to 12 years old and been working on the streets for years already. Some of them may have lost their parents to death or imprisonment, others may have dysfunctional families. For whatever reason, these kids decided to stay at 'school' with Stacey. She moved them out of the dormitories and into her apartment so they have a family atmosphere and they are enjoying the holidays together. Maybe it's the first time they have ever really celebrated this special Chinese festival. They have had special meals, watched videos and enjoyed a fireworks display. For them, this must be a taste of heaven on earth. This festival lasts about two weeks, after which the other kids will return and school will start again.. For these children who stayed behind, Stacey has provided a safe family and Christ centered place for kids who have never been allowed to be cared for like children..

### **Paul Carlson Project**

Dear Partners in Ministry,

As I write this letter, a twenty foot container full of medical equipment and supplies has arrived in Kinshasha for shipment north to the hospitals (in the Ubangi-Mongala region of NW Congo). The Partnership has purchased three badly needed vehicles for use in both medical and development ministry (29 ministry vehicles had been either stolen or destroyed by looting Chadian soldiers). One community clinic has a new cement floor (replacing the dirt one), and finally, doors and windows. Another container carries metal for roofs; paint for walls; a well-digging rig; pumps to move water; water storage tanks; parts for restoring sawmills; fanning, carpentry, and mechanic tools; these are just some of the items making their way to our downtrodden, and yet joyously faithful brothers and sisters of the



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Covenant Church of this region and others of their community. I was very encouraged to see that all of the hospitals already had new mattresses on their patient beds, water was running from the Karawa spring and that work had already begun in cultivating the orchards.

This is happening because of the the generosity by you and others, freely offered in Christ's name. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jim Sundholm

### Website Updates

Take a look at [www.messiahdetroit.org](http://www.messiahdetroit.org). Our unofficial webmaster, Tom Kuhr, has added a new section featuring archival photos of Messich Church. Also, some information about the organ is highlighted. If you have information or photos that you'd like to add to the Web site, please contact Tom Kuhr at [spyderhuff@aol.com](mailto:spyderhuff@aol.com) or call 313-563-3455.

### Living Arts News

#### Living Arts Workshop Series Spring 2005 Dates:

**Irish Dance Workshop:** March 14--7-8:30 p.m.  
(ages 10 - adult)

**Flamenco Dance Workshop:**  
April 25 - May 31--Tuesdays 6-7 p.m. (ages 10 - 15)  
Tuesdays 7 - 8 p.m. (ages 16 - adult)

**Photographing Children:**  
April 6 - May 11--Thursdays 7-8:30 p.m. This class is for adults only.

**DanceAbility:** an integrated creative movement class for those with and without disabilities starting in April/May for 6 weeks. Dates TBD.

**Golf Outing to support Living Arts:** April 30 at Dearborn Hills Golf Course. Call 313-841-4765 or e-mail [chris@livingartsdetroit.org](mailto:chris@livingartsdetroit.org) for more information.

### Children's Ministry

As we begin our new year, we would like to take this opportunity to thank each one of our ministry volunteers for their service to our Lord and to the children. Thank you for using your God given talents and abilities to minister to the children. Jesus said "Let the little children come unto me and do not hinder them for such is the kingdom of heaven."

We began our new year with our annual ice skating outing at Clark Park. The weather was perfect and the children and adults enjoyed hot chocolate, donuts, and time spent with one another. We hope to see more of you there next year. See page 7 for pictures.

This year we will begin implementation of our new child safety guidelines. The guidelines were developed to promote the safety of our children, foster support for our Christian Education teachers, and provide strong Christian leadership within our church. We will begin implementation of these guidelines in April and will continue through 2006.

Discussions have been initiated with Bob regarding the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday worship service. On the months we have a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday all children, 6 years and older, join our service. We would like to take this opportunity to make the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday worship service more inclusive of the children. We will continue to work with Bob to further develop this concept.

This year VBS will be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of July with the theme being Marketplace 27-28 A.D.: Christ's Chosen. The setting takes place in Capernaum and throughout the week children will observe reenactments of Jesus choosing his twelve disciples and teaching the Lord's Prayer. More details will be forth coming.

Thank you for allowing us to serve your children and please keep them and the children's ministry in your prayers.

*Stacey Etherton-Agius and Bonnie Gillis*

### Thoughts To Ponder

"No-one can possibly do more than decide what to believe." *Charles Williams*

"Advocacy without proximity is hypocrisy." *Richard Bieber*

"A truth that is told with bad intent beats all the lies you can invent." *William Blake*

## Fish on Friday

*Submitted by Phyllis Baca-Flores*

Even the Protestant kids ate fish on Friday at Amelia Earhart Junior High. Religious rules had nothing to do with it. Our taste buds were ecumenical when it came to that square of processed fish painted with a smear of tartar sauce, that we pushed along on orange plastic trays, beside mounds of instant mashed potatoes, scoops of corn, yeast rolls, and pints of milk. Dessert was usually a parfait gelatin that was gladly replaced with an ice cream sandwich for those who had that extra nickel.

Fish on Friday was no different than Sloppy Joes on Wednesday, except when it was Ash Wednesday, and even that would go unnoticed if it weren't for the tell-tale smudge and the kids who let us know that we had dirt on our foreheads. Our response was either a mock surprised "thank you" like we didn't know it was there, or a wavering "I'm Catholic" that didn't really explain anything, but was never challenged. The curious attention was a small price to pay for the quick cross of ashes we received in the morning before school, rather than sit through a whole rosary in the afternoon just to get the same Father, Son, and Holy Ghost blessing that kicked off our Lenten season.

The conversation at the lunch table on that meatless Wednesday was always the same – what were we giving up? Piously, we replied, "Sweets," and offered up our Twinkies from home and our apple crisp with raisins to our Protestant friends who wondered at our devout saintliness. It was always sweets. What else was there for kids our age back then?

Soon after, Easter would ride in on Spring's promise of sunshine with painted eggs, lacy bonnets, and permission to indulge in the one thing we had given up for the past forty days – just like Jesus in the wilderness – forty days and forty nights of self-sacrifice.

By the following Wednesday a stray nickel found in a bottomless purse or in the pocket of jeans just before lunch quickly amended the sacrifice to remove ice cream, specifically ice cream sandwiches, from the forbidden list. After all, it wasn't really sweets - merely frozen milk.

Within two weeks, cakes and cookies were transferred to the okay list, as they forged their identity into baked goods that had been masquerading as sweets. It was obvious that in the purest sense, candy was the real culprit. The misunderstanding was acceptable to the Protestants when we kept our Twinkies and apple crisp with the raisins.

We tried very hard to stay our course. We closed our eyes and envisioned Jesus walking through the desert resisting the devil's temptations. Even when the devil offered Jesus the world - probably around the third week - Jesus' resisted. But a Sweet Tart isn't the whole world. A licorice stick, red or black doesn't equate to all the kingdoms of the land so by week three candy bars were elevated as the sole evil temptation.

On Saturday we skipped toward St. Anthony's for confession and almost passed the corner store. We could buy a surprise bag filled with penny candy and baseball cards for two cents. That would be safe. Oh Henry and Baby Ruth tugged at our resolve. Kit Kats and Mars whispered to our taste buds. We relented and bought a PayDay. It might be worth another Hail Mary, but we gave in, anyway. We stood in line against the wall waiting our turn in the confessional, while we dwelled on our latest indiscretion. As the priest pulled back the sliding door that separated us from absolution, we justified that only chocolate candy bars were outlawed, thus eliminating the need to reveal the yummy taste of peanuts and fudge that still lingered in our mouths.

Condemnation swept in just before Palm Sunday. Not just over the ice cream, cakes, Sweet Tarts, and Paydays, but a time or two we lapsed and absent mindedly bit into a Three Musketeer or Chunky. We quickly realized our folly, but we also knew how much God, like our mothers, hated waste, so we figured we should finish it off, lest we be reminded of the starving kids in China. Once again, our guilt was suppressed by our creative ability to stretch our vow until the only promise we had left was that not one stick of Juicy Fruit gum would pass our lips before sunrise on Easter Sunday.

Good Friday loomed two days before Easter – two days before we could uh, eat sweets, again. We politely smiled at jokes and walked with our heads slightly bowed – after all, it was the day our Lord died and we should show some respect. We obediently reached for the fish in the lunch line, that tarter smeared square that would still be our choice even if we had one. We offered up our gelatin parfaits to our Protestant friends who thought we were very devout. We thought, "Almost there". We filed out of the lunchroom as we removed the green wrapper and slipped a piece of Double Mint gum into our mouths. After all, it wasn't a stick of Juicy Fruit or meat.



## Free

When my father died;  
My mother at my side  
Said, "You're strong; we'll have to lean on you".  
When my children left,  
And my heart had wept;  
My family said, "We'll have to lean on you".

I've been strong and bold  
From very young to old.  
I remember things others choose to forget.  
I faced my fears and pain,  
And standing I remained.  
Nothing had kept me down as of yet.

But the strength I carried,  
When others were harried;  
Was a mere survival technique at best.  
I longed for peace,  
Where I could release  
All my burdens, and find a place to rest.

One day I was saved,  
By Christ's precious grace;  
And I found that comfort zone complete.  
I found joy and peace  
Amazing grace so sweet;  
When finally I laid my burdens at God's feet.

A special scripture grew...  
"I can do all things through you".  
Within my heart I found somewhere to lean.  
He held my hand,  
Through even my own plan  
While each repentance found His pastures green.

Submission caught my heart,  
Long coming from the start;  
And tugged with determined hands of silk.  
I gave up my will  
So God could overfill;  
My plate with meat instead of milk.

Trials came my way,  
But Joy was here to stay;  
Just because I had finally obeyed.  
Then PANIC said hello!  
And fury overflowed!  
With fears and tears and sickness kept at bay.

Thoughts of past scenes,  
Plagued my days and dreams;  
When I had overcome all sorrow and strife.  
Did God leave me?  
No that could not be!  
Yet, I'd never been so helpless in my life.

I was on God's course.  
The plan - me at my worst!  
Without myself or friends to lean upon.  
When a light flickered bright,  
With echoes in the night;  
Singing "I am weak but You are strong".

It simply had to be,  
The very weakest me;  
Before the others understood it whole.  
But not just for those  
Was your plan chose  
I let You and You showed You're in control.

For it strengthens me,  
When I lean on Thee.  
We grow closer when on You I depend.  
And with joy I give,  
Each hour that I live;  
And welcome each new weakness that you send.

**Free** by Phyllis Baca-Flores  
05/30/94

## Messiah Women

Messiah women!! Get ready to retreat!!! Returning to the Nazarene Conference Center near Howell, the annual gathering scheduled for April 29-30, begins with check-in from 6-7pm Friday evening and concludes at 4:30 Saturday afternoon. Preparation help is needed, contact Marilyn Humphrey. Reservations will be taken at church during the month of April.

JUST GIVE ME JESUS, a life-changing revival for women: September 23-24, 2005, The Palace of Auburn Hills. Friday: 7-9 p.m., Saturday 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. This is free, registration is not required. For more information, visit [www.AnneGrahamLotz.com](http://www.AnneGrahamLotz.com) or [JGMJDetroit@comcast.net](mailto:JGMJDetroit@comcast.net)

## Organ Restoration

After much anticipation, the Messiah pipe organ has begun a new life, thanks to the many prayers and the financial support from the congregation that have made its restoration possible.

Why was this work needed? Basically, after over 80 years of continuous service, the fundamental mechanism or “action” that operated the pipes was worn out. For the organ to produce sound, it is necessary to open a valve at the base of each pipe to admit air into the pipe from the wind chest. (The air is provided by a blower in the basement under the organ chamber.) The former “action” was of the electro-pneumatic type. When the organist presses a key at the organ console, the air inside a “pneumatic” – a sort of bellows – is released, causing the pneumatic to collapse, pulling on a “tracker” – a narrow piece of wood – which in turn pulls on a mechanism to open the valve under the pipe. These pneumatics had become stiff with age and could not be replaced because they had been rigidly attached to the trackers. Because the pneumatics were so stiff, the pipe valves opened very slowly or failed to close properly. This is what caused the strange sounds you sometimes heard in the sanctuary. In fact, the situation had gotten so bad that three entire “ranks” or sets of pipes have not been able to be used at all for the past several months.

Upon the recommendation of our long-time organ technician, John Werner, this action has been replaced by a “digital” system. In effect, the organ console now becomes a digital controller like the game controller on a video game. When the organist presses a key, the digital system logic determines which pipe valve to open. Each pipe now has its own individual electro-magnetic valve that is controlled by the digital system, instead of the pneumatic-tracker arrangement. The result should be a much more responsive instrument with no dead or slow-acting notes.

Because of the digital nature of the new system, it was also easy to add some new console features and some digital voices to the organ to make it a more flexible and versatile instrument. Although all the “pipe” sounds you are familiar with remain, soon you should be able to hear new sounds like trumpet, clarinet, and chimes.

This refurbished instrument should continue to support our tradition of robust congregational singing and worship for many years.

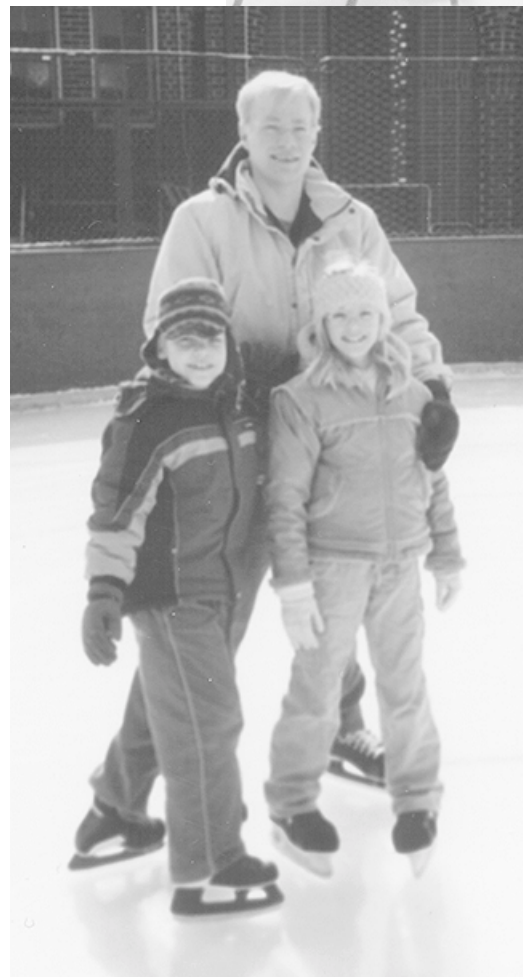
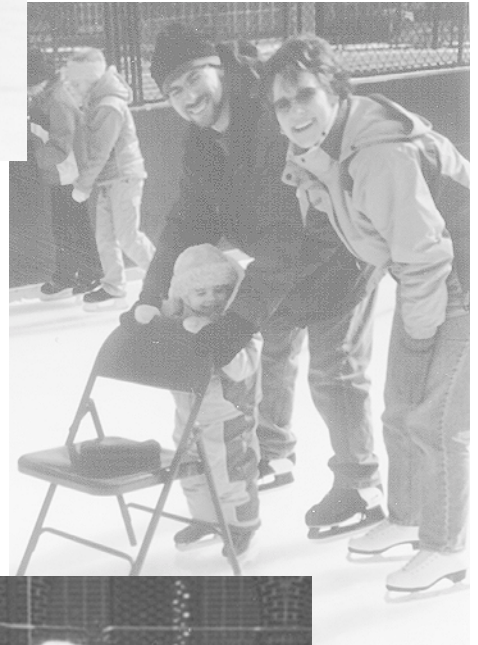
## Thursday Morning Coffee Break Bible Study

When I make announcements during Sunday service about the Women’s Thursday Morning Coffee Break Bible Study, I usually find myself tongue tied by the lengthy title. I have to catch myself because I always want to say Women’s Coffee Break Club. I guess it’s because our group has the feel of a club. There is that sense of belonging and camaraderie. Secrets shared on Thursdays stay at Thursdays. And we have coffee! That certainly sounds like a club to me. The best part is that the only exclusive rule for attending is gender. Girls only! Actually, we bend that rule, too. Dan and Ruben are always eager take down chairs, move the piano, collect the books and share the goodies that the women bring to keep our coffee and tea company. For what is tea without crumpets? And Pastor Bob lends his voice to lead us in song.

There are other men invited into this special circle of women – John, Peter, Paul, Isaiah – of course Jesus and others that teach us to worship, pray, submit, obey, love one another, and love God. Our motto scripture verse is “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work. If one falls down, her friend can help her up. “ Ecclesiastes 4:9-10. God has helped us live up to that verse time and time again; sometimes without us even realizing it. I love that I can count on “my ladies” and that they can count on me to bring our petitions to the Lord faithfully. I love when God chooses to show us the fruits of our labor. I recently informed one of my nieces who is resisting God’s knocking, that the Thursday ladies are praying for her. She groaned – always a good sign! Just ask my kids. It used to be that Miss Ethel’s prayers were the main source of such groaning in my circle.

We have grown in spirit and number. The same faces are not always present, but the same Spirit is always in attendance. We hope to see new faces every week. Perhaps it will be yours.

**Clark Park Skating Outing  
February 19, 2005**



## Messiah Calendar Lent/Easter Season Special Events

Good Friday Service	March 25 12:00 noon to 3 p.m.
<b>Easter Day Celebrations--March 27</b>	
Sunrise Service and Communion	7:30 a.m.
Pancake Breakfast	8:30 a.m.
Sunday School	9:30 a.m.
Worship Service	10:45 a.m.
Women's Retreat	April 29 & 30
Point Pelee Youth Birding Outing	May 6 & 7
Messiah Work Day	May 14

### Each Week at Messiah

Sunday 9:30 a.m.	Sunday School (Adults and Children)
Sunday 10:45 a.m.	Worship Service
Tuesday 10:00 a.m.	Bible Study
Wednesday 7:30 p.m.	Bible Study
Thursday 9:30 a.m.	Women's Coffee Break Bible Study
Thursday 7:30 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Friday 7 p.m.	Genesis Youth (For all teens)
Friday 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.	Weekly Prayer Fellowship

Church Council meets Tuesdays at 7:15 p.m. after the first Sunday of each month.

Church Trustees meet Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. after the first Sunday of each month.

**Messiah Church**  
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**Office Manager, Janet Swanson**  
**Caretaker, Bill Zeigler**