



The Church of the Messiah
50 State Route 24 West,
Chester, NJ 07930
Phone: 908-879-7208

The Messenger

April 2020



The Rev. Margaret Otterburn, Rector

Carol King, Editor

Email: messiahchester@earthlink.net

Website: www.messiahchester.org

Regular Sunday Worship Schedule

- 8 am** spoken service with Holy Eucharist
- 9 am** participatory service for children 6 yrs. & under, and family members
1st Sundays
- 10 am** service of Holy Eucharist with music and Sunday school. Nursery care is available.

Mid Week Worship Schedule **

- Mon 8:00 am** Morning Prayer
- Tues 8:00 am** Morning Prayer
- Tues 9:45 am** Pray and Play
- Weds 7:00 am** Holy Eucharist
- Weds 8:00 am** Contemplative Prayer
- Thurs 8:00 am** Morning Prayer

** Other services such as a midday Eucharist or Contemplative Prayer will be offered upon request to the rector

Messiah Vestry:

- The Rev. Margaret Otterburn, Rector
- Merica G (2022) Warden
- Diane C (2021) Warden
- Michelle O, Treasurer
- Debbie B (2021)
- Caroline H (2022)
- Gareth H (2022)
- Hardee K (2021)
- Jackie M (2022)
- Linda O (2021)
- Susan O (2023)
- Craig R (2023)
- Dave S (2023)

We are moving towards the end of Lent as I write. This we know. Lent ends at the end of Holy Week on April 11. But we are at an uncertain stage of dealing with the corona virus or the COVID-19. We live in a scary time; we do not know what the challenges of the days and weeks ahead will be. We ask "Will many of us contract it? Will many of us die soon? Will we do enough of the right things and use the right resources to help the medics deal successfully with the sick so that we come through?" So many questions which we cannot answer! None of us have been this way before, but we are a family and each of us cares for us all and will want to do all we can to help one another.

I certainly have tried to contact everyone and to find out if everyone is safe and well. Please let me know if I can support you in any way. We can talk; we can pray together; we can meet via conference call and join together in Bible studies the same way.

Sadly, our usual way of being present with Our Lord from Palm Sunday through Holy Week to Easter will be different this year. The Sunday services are being brought to you by live streaming; Palm Sunday and all the services of Holy Week will be done as best we can. Some of the actions we take, such as the Maundy Thursday meal, the foot washing, the collaborative stripping of the altar, cannot be done. But the words of the service and whatever actions we can do will all be live streamed for you to see and experience, as best you can, from the safety of your own home. The Easter Vigil, which brings us to the proclamation of the resurrection and Easter Sunday, will also be a different experience. Christ will be raised in our hearts wherever we are, instead of being celebrated by the congregation here at Messiah.

For some of you, being at home means you are not working and thus not receiving a salary. I have been given some additional money for my discretionary fund. I can imagine that your temporary job loss for an unknown number of weeks may be devastating for you financially. If it will help for me to pay one or more bills for you, please let me know. I do not want anyone to be in default of any bill through this situation.

On the reverse side — as you know, our church building is still here even though programs and worship are not happening here. There are still bills to pay. If your income has not decreased and you can continue to maintain your pledge during this time, it will be much appreciated. Our vestry members encouraged me to remind you that you can pay online if that is easier than sending a check.

By now, you may have watched the live streaming of our first service. I hope that this way of offering you the opportunity to worship at home (but with others from Messiah) worked for you. The bulletin was sent out on Thursday and the sermon after the service. It might be very helpful to have a Book of Common Prayer open during the service; if you wish to borrow one I will put one in a bag for you on the porch (using gloved hands.) You can, of course, print the bulletin and use that as a guide.

My dear Messiah family, this is a challenging time. Please know that I am praying for you, calling you, texting or emailing you from time to time. I sincerely hope it will not be too long before we can again be together.

God bless you,
Margaret+

Holy One, you are our comfort and strength in times of sudden disaster, crisis, or chaos. Surround us now with your grace and peace.



April Calendar



Sun.	Apr.	5	8:00 am	Palm Sunday - spoken Eucharist with blessing of palms <i>(available via free conference call.)</i>
Sun.	Apr.	5	10 am	Palm Sunday - Eucharist with music & blessing of palms <i>(available via live streaming.)</i>
Mon.	Apr.	6	4 pm	Stations of the Cross in sanctuary <i>(available via free conference call.)</i>
Weds.	Apr.	8	7:30 pm	Tenebrae Service <i>(modified version available via live streaming.)</i>
Thurs.	Apr.	9	7:30 pm	Maundy Thursday Service w/foot-washing & stripping of altar <i>(modified version available via live streaming.)</i>
Fri.	Apr.	10	noon	Long Valley Cross Walk <i>(live video to be arranged)</i>
Fri.	Apr.	10	7:30 pm	Good Friday worship <i>(modified version available via live streaming.)</i>
Sat.	Apr.	11	9 - 11 am	Re-Create the sanctuary for Easter
Sat.	Apr.	11	6 pm	Great Vigil of Easter <i>(available via live streaming.)</i>
Sun.	Apr.	12	8:00 am	Easter Eucharist (spoken) <i>(available via live streaming.)</i>
Sun.	Apr.	12	10:00 am	Festal Easter Eucharist <i>(available via live streaming.)</i>
Sat.	Apr.	18	9 am	Men of Messiah meeting in kitchen
Tues.	Apr.	21	7 pm	Vestry Meeting <i>(available via free conference call.)</i>
Fri.	Apr.	24		deadline for May Messenger
TBD			4 pm - 7 pm	Homeless Solutions

For more about ongoing activities at Messiah, check our website: www.messiahchester.org

For worship services and classes available via free conference call. The # is 605-313-5088 and at the prompt 108620#

The Lenten series concludes:

Monday April 6

Stations of the Cross: 4 pm in the church. *(available via free conference call.)* We have been using the traditional liturgy this year, appreciated by those participating.

Corona Virus Closings

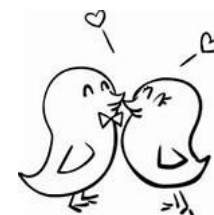
St. Elsie's thrift shop and the SRC are currently closed due to the corona virus emergency. The Tuesday lunch group is not meeting, and a MOM meeting is still to be determined. Easter gift bags have been postponed until Pentecost. The local artisans show and sale scheduled for May 9 has been canceled.

April Birthdays

Apr	15	Dottie W
Apr	27	Peter M

April Anniversary

Apr	27	Sue & Tim C
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Anxiety was born in the very same moment as mankind. And since we will never be able to master it, we will have to learn to live with it — just as we have learned to live with storms.

— Paulo Coelho

Holy Week and Easter

The Holy Week services which we usually have are described below

Palm Sunday: April 5

Services: Holy Eucharist 8, and 10 am

The 8 am available by free conference call

The 10 am service will be available by live streaming

Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday. The liturgy begins in expectation and celebration as we re-enact Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem by reading the Gospel of his triumphant entry and as we bless and bear palms. Next we move into the lessons appointed for the Eucharist. We participate in the reading of the Passion narrative, marking the beginning of Holy week.

Monday in Holy Week: April 6

Morning Prayer 8 am available by free conference call

Tuesday in Holy Week: April 7

Morning Prayer 8am available by free conference call

Evening Prayer 7 pm available by free conference call

Wednesday in Holy Week : April 8

Morning Prayer 8 am available by free conference call

Tenebrae at 7:30 pm a modified version of this service

will be available by live streaming

This special service of psalms and readings features the gradual extinguishing of candles and other lights in the church until only a single candle, a symbol of our Lord, remains. This candle is hidden, representing the apparent victory of the forces of evil. At the very end a loud noise is made symbolizing the earthquake at the time of the resurrection. The hidden candle is restored and by its light all depart in silence.

Maundy Thursday: April 9

Morning Prayer at 8 am available by free conference call

7:30 by foot washing, and remembrance of Jesus' Last Supper, our Holy Eucharist, and the stripping of the altar.

a modified version of this service will be available by live streaming

The word Maundy is derived from the Latin word "Mandere" which means "to command." Two commandments are given: first, "love one another as I have loved you." Jesus washed the disciples feet as the symbol of his love, and thus in the liturgy we repeat this action. The second commandment is "Do this in remembrance of me." The Lord's Supper was instituted during the annual Passover Seder. Normally, we would share the Lord's Supper, the last one Jesus ate with his disciples before crucifixion. Then we would remove the remaining consecrated bread and wine to a "Chapel of Repose" (lower hall) where they remain. Then we would strip the altar area to create the sense of loss felt by Jesus' followers as he was taken away.

Good Friday: April 10

Long Valley Community Cross Walk at 12 noon, beginning at Bartley Rd Presbyterian Church live video to be arranged

Participatory children's "Stations of the Cross" 2:30pm (at Messiah) canceled

Good Friday liturgy at 7:30 pm a modified version of this service

will be available by live streaming

Good Friday is the name given this day in the English tradition, the day the passion and death of our Lord is commemorated. The cross is revered during the evening liturgy of prayers and music, and we offer the reserved sacrament.

Holy Saturday: April 11

The Great Vigil of Easter at 6pm

the service will be available by live streaming.

The Great Vigil is the first service of Easter Day. The service consists of four parts: a service of light (we begin in darkness with the entry of the Pascal candle,) a service of 3 lessons which tell our salvation history (we will ask people to enact them as they are being read.) We renew our baptismal vows and the Holy Eucharist – the first Communion of Easter. We celebrate and proclaim "Christ is risen!"

Easter Day: April 12

The 8 am available by free conference call.

The 10 am service will be available by live streaming.

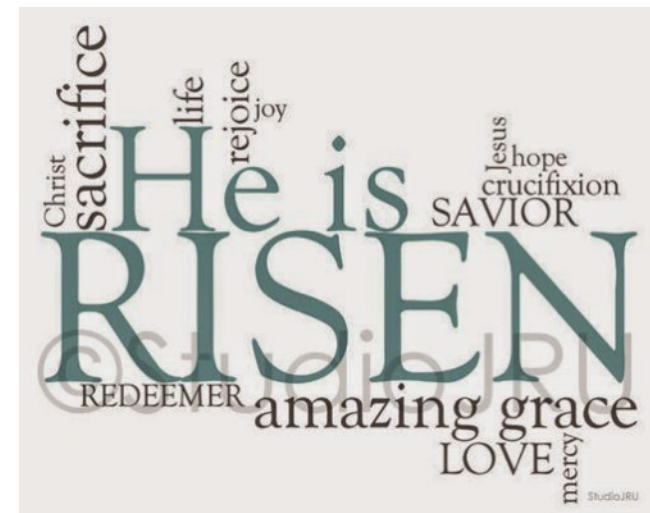
Holy Eucharist at 8, 9 and 10 am

An Easter egg hunt follows both the 9 and 10 am services.

Hopefully this can happen at Pentecost instead.

Join us at home for your "Festal coffee hour"

Easter Day brings the joy of the risen Christ.



In Appreciation for Tech Worship

Margaret, Sue, Laura and all who helped - thank you for the "new style" Morning Prayer service in which we just participated! It was a new technological achievement for our congregation; and unlike most new technological launchings, seemed to go without a hitch! Thank you, Margaret, Caroline and Sue, for putting this all together - including a complete program with the full text and music! And thank you, Laura, for the music and your beautiful voice! And thank you, all who produced the streaming communications.

We were especially appreciative that the service contained one of Hardee's favorite Bible stories, in the Gospel of John: the stubborn Pharisees who kept questioning the man born blind, and one of his responses, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

And Judy's favorite hymn, "Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart."

And so much of the service seemed especially appropriate to today's environment.

The 23rd psalm

St. Chrysostom "when two or three are gathered together..."

The recessional: "Grant us wisdom,
grant us courage,
for the facing of this hour"

Well done, oh good and faithful people!

Hardee and Judy K.



*God of grace and God of glory,
on thy people pour thy power;
crown the ancient church's story;
bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom,
grant us courage,
for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.*

Messiah Wear Orders - Program on Hold

We will be offering Messiah wear, and will also be adding St. Elsie's wear; but our inability to gather for worship during the corona virus crisis has placed this program on hold..

The cost will be:

\$25 for golf style shirts

\$35 for an active fabric pullover.

To get the group pricing, we will need to place a minimum order of 12 shirts (golf style/pullover together) in the Messiah design, and 12 in the St. Elsie's design.

Kathy K



Confirmation and Reception into the Episcopal Church Saturday, April 25th, 10 am

A Confirmation class is offered annually for teenagers who are 8th grade and older. Please speak with Margaret about it if you are interested.

An adult Inquirer's class is offered once or twice during the year. Please talk to Margaret if you are interested in attending. A class usually lasts for 5 sessions. The class is for those unfamiliar with the teachings of the Church in general and/or the Episcopal Church in particular. During the class, we allow time for discussion of any questions you may have. A booklet is provided with reading assignments.



After completing the class, you may choose to be confirmed by the Bishop at the diocesan cathedral. If you were *Confirmed* in another tradition, you can be *Received* by the Bishop at this service.

If you feel you would like to renew your Confirmation vows, you can choose to do that at the service. The Bishop will lay hands upon you and pray for you, similar to the way she welcomes and prays for Confirmands.

The Confirmation service was to be on Saturday April 25 10 am, at Christ Church Newton.

While all the classes are still offered, they are all available via free conference call. The # is 605-313-5088 and at the prompt 108620#



Pentecost Bags for Needy Children in Chester

We will no longer be continuing our Easter bag ministry this year. Instead we will do "Pentecost bags."
We are hoping that by Pentecost Sunday, May 31, we will be able to be together again.
If this proves to be true, we will welcome your bags for the needy families on that date and will then safely take them to the food pantry.

Gareth H, Vestry Member



Book 'n Movie Night Tuesday May 5

This was moved to March 31 as the date would have been in Holy Week. It is canceled at this time. The next Book and Movie Night is Tuesday May 5

Hildegard of Bingen, Contender in Lent Madness Competition

In the Lent Madness competition, Hildegard of Bingen is one of the contenders for the Golden Halo. As the COVID-19 pandemic sweeps across the globe, Hildegard's writings in science and medicine seem highly relevant. One of her unique contributions to medicine and theology is her use of the term 'viriditas' which is roughly translated as greenness, vitality, freshness and new life. For Hildegard, this was both a medical and theological term. Observing the way that the land around her couldn't help but 'sweat greenness' and new life, she connected this to the 'new life' of human health and flourishing that was to be found in Christ. 'The earth sweats greenness' Hildegard observed, and in these days of isolation to prevent spreading COVIV-19, we are keenly aware how our spiritual and physical flourishing requires us to reconnect with the green of nature.

The full bracket is online at the Lent Madness website at www.lentmadness.org.

Stewardship Switches Gears

On March 29, Cynthia McChesney from our Diocesan office was schedule to talk on "Planned Giving." However, due to the coronavirus restrictions, her talk has been postponed until we resume in-person services.

In the meantime, our Stewardship Committee will switch attention to the here-and-now. We want to remind everyone how important it is to keep up our pledge payments this year. Many of our normal sources of revenue have disappeared already.

St. Elsie's Thrift and the Senior Resource Center have both shut down. We are suddenly faced with a potential, unexpected financial crisis.

If our congregation can keep our pledge payments up to date, that will be a huge help. Unfortunately, payments will have to be paid by internet, U.S. mail, or hand delivery for now. For the internet electronic option, see the Donate button at the bottom of the home page on the Messiah website.



Hardee K, Vestry member, Stewardship

Social Events and Coffee Hour

I am excited to be organizing a **committee** to assist with **events** and **coffee hour** throughout the year.

We currently have a sign-up sheet for coffee hour in the parish hall.

I would love to have a list of people willing to do coffee hour on a regular basis — every three months rotation similar to the way our worship schedule is done. I look forward to any suggestions.



Linda O, Vestry member, Social Events and Coffee Hour

Almighty and everlasting God, You are strength to those who suffer and comfort to those who grieve. Let the prayers of your children who are in trouble rise to you. We claim your promises of wholeness as we pray for those who are ill or are suffering loss and long for your healing touch. Make the weak strong, the sick healthy, the broken whole, and confirm those who serve them as agents of your love. To everyone in distress, grant mercy, grant relief, grant refreshment.

Bible Study & Education For Ministry (EfM)

There are two **daytime** Bible study groups One meets on **Mondays** from **2 – 3:30** and is studying the Acts of the Apostles, the other, which is currently studying St Matthew's Gospel meets on **Thursdays, 11 am - 12 noon**. Both groups meet in the lower conference room.

If you would like to have specific readings for a particular week, please talk to Margaret. You are welcome to come to either (or both) of these groups. Bibles are provided or you can bring your own.

There are 2 EfM groups. One meets on **Tuesdays 2- 4 pm** and the other meets on **Wednesdays at 6:30- 8:30** They also met in the lower conference room.

While all the classes are still offered, they are all available via free conference call. The # is 605-313-5088 and at the prompt 108620#

Neighbors in Need

"Neighbors in Need" in April is **North Porch**.

always needed items include:

- formula & soy formula
- Diapers, size– 4, 5, 6 and Pull-ups
- Baby wipes
- baby food – all ages- fruit, veggie

No need to spend \$\$\$\$ —
Those less expensive store brands are fine.



Property Report

Chris has spent a lot of time checking and fixing all 27 (!) of our emergency exit signs. They all have new batteries and are in working order.

Flower ministry

Would you like to honor a living person or memorialize your beloved dead? Altar flower donations are an excellent way to do so! It is simple: Just sign up on the flower chart, then drop a check in the collection plate or mail it to the office.

To find the chart, turn left as soon as you come into the entrance hallway. You can make a request for the type or color of flowers you would like to have displayed. The suggested donation is \$25. There are no flowers during Lent but we will be enjoying beautiful flowers again in the middle of April.



Homeless Solutions April date To Be Determined

This is an opportunity for "hands-on" ministry: cooking and serving the dinner at the Morris County Homeless shelter called "Homeless Solutions." We serve there at least once a month (12+ times each year.) Anyone aged 9 years or older is welcome to help. The sign-up sheet is on the board in the parish hall. An April date is still to be determined. We will be serving on Saturday, May 16.

if you would like to know more about what is involved, talk to Margaret or any of the people who have already been there.



We intend this ministry to be a way to serve "hands-on" instead of just sending money; **but** serving about 70 people costs roughly \$100 each time. Your financial support is also welcome. If you can sponsor a meal or part of a meal, please mark "Homeless Solutions" on your check.

"Plus One" Campaign

This is a very simple way to remember families in need. Whenever you do your marketing, just add one item to your cart. Your single item, added to everyone else's single item, will make a huge difference.



There is no glory in star or blossom till looked upon by a loving eye; There is no fragrance in April breezes till breathed with joy as they wander by.

William Cullen Bryant



Youth group find-raiser in the early church

A Classic April Fool's Day Prank

As well as people playing pranks on one another on April Fools' Day, elaborate pranks have appeared on radio and TV stations, newspapers, and websites, and have been performed by large corporations. In one famous prank in 1957, the BBC broadcast a film in their *Panorama* current affairs series purporting to show Swiss farmers picking freshly-grown spaghetti, in what they called the Swiss Spaghetti Harvest. The BBC were later flooded with requests to purchase a spaghetti plant, forcing them to declare the film a hoax on the news the next day.

Wikipedia

Here cometh April again, and as far as I can see the world hath more fools in it than ever.

Charles Lamb