

Letter from Your Wardens

Welcome to 2024! With God's grace and mercy, we made it. 2023 was a busy and productive year at Messiah. Many of us have spent the last month or so dealing with or dodging the Flu, Covid, RSV and other ailments. With that in mind please remember to let us know if you are in need of assistance. Also, as a gentle reminder, if you are sick or suspect you may be getting sick, please stay home to reduce the risk of spreading illness to others and if you know you have been exposed to someone who is sick and you come to church, please consider wearing a mask because you may be asymptomatic and yet contagious.

Our most exciting news is that we are continuing to work with our diocese, St Mary's vestry, and our candidate for priest in charge (PIC). Specifically, we are currently working on finalizing the covenant between St Mary's and Messiah to share a PIC, the specifics on finances, a letter of agreement with the prospective PIC, and both vestries will be meeting in-person with Bishop Hughes and Canon Clark later this month. We hope to have our PIC in place by Easter, which is the end of March, or April at the latest, but all in God's time.

We continue to work on all the necessary projects on the property. Last year we made the following improvements on the rectory: attic insulated, inside painting throughout, slate floors cleaned and sealed, wood floor cleaning and sealing started, exterior first floor windows and basement door caulked, sealed, and painted. More "debris" was also removed from the second floor of the barn. Additional emergency lights were installed in the thrift shop and 2 additional fire extinguishers will be installed this week, to bring them up to code. We also narrowly missed a major flood in the thrift shop thanks to another Messiah miracle. Former Messiah member Jayne Mutascio heard the shooting water, turned it off, and notified us immediately. The thrift shop was back up and running after losing only one day. Thank you to all involved in assuring that happened. Additional air purifiers were added to the sanctuary, parish hall and lower hall to potentially mitigate risk for Covid and other transmission. The Sensi thermostat system, which was installed in early 2022, has proven to be a great asset in conserving energy by keeping temperatures adjusted to energy efficient levels and automatically returning temperatures to their schedule after 2 hours if they have been manually adjusted.

We have been blessed to have a supply priest at least twice a month throughout the year - more than many other churches in our diocese. Messiah members have been able to attend services on Facebook live every Sunday and on special holidays. We have been very fortunate to have several members step up and fill voids for service assignments when others have become sick or had other personal emergencies.

We have shared meals together at many special coffee hours and dinners and had a very well attended fire pit barbecue with St Mary's congregants. We look forward to many more shared events once we have our PIC and the weather and people's health allow. St Mary's and Messiah shared a visit with Bishop Hughes back in October 2023 and I know both vocal choirs are excited to have another opportunity to sing together.

With two Lauras (St. Mary's music director is also a very gifted Laura) leading the choirs, it would be wonderful to have a very full choir for a couple of joint special services a year.

Many opportunities for outreach have been provided and we have continued to support many of them to help our mission to reach out to and help the community.

2024 looks to be a very promising year.

Debbie and Merica
January 8, 2024