



CHURCH of  
the MESSIAH

MESSIAHGWYNEDD.ORG

# The Rector's Message

Fifth Sunday of Easter

**SUNDAY, 28 April 2024**

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## A Message from the Interim Rector



Saturday, April 27, 2024

Dear friends,

Does God exist? Some years ago, a wind turbine in Devon, England, fell over and crashed to the ground. The cause of this disaster? Incredibly, it was too much wind - apparently, when it blows too fiercely the machinery cannot cope. A few days later it happened again. Although both wind turbines had been built to last twenty-five years, after only three years they had been reduced to mangled heaps in the landscape. The double calamity prompted a journalist - an opponent of wind farms - to claim that it was irrefutable proof of God's existence.

I guess it all depends on your point of view. If you want proof of God's existence, there might be other ways. The comedian Woody Allen once said: "If only God would give me some clear sign! Like making a large deposit in my name at a Swiss bank." I went to a church service that was a variation on this theme. The minister arrived in a red Ferrari sports car which he parked on the stage inside the church. The message he preached was simple: this car could be yours too. All you need is to have faith, and because God is generous and rewards the righteous, he wants us all to own Ferraris. It's what's known as the "Prosperity Gospel".

Much as it appeals to the boy in me, faith and Ferraris aren't really linked in this way. (Besides which, I don't see how a Ferrari would fit in Messiah). I like churches and preachers which are humble and don't brag about themselves. I hope that if someone is seeking proof of God's existence, they would come to church and find some evidence of it there in the people, rather than in the carpark. In theory, it is within the community of the faithful that God is most fully present.

Former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams once said, in a discussion with the atheist Richard Dawkins, that "Religion has always been a matter of community building, a matter of building relations of compassion, fellow-feeling and, dare I say it, inclusion. The notion that religious commitment can be purely a private matter is one that runs against the grain of religious history."

That's all true, but we still have the unanswered question of whether or not we believe in God. Perhaps we should ask instead, "well, *how* do you believe in God? Especially one that seems to permit so much suffering, or who is silent before our ever-pressing questions?" The author C.S. Lewis wrote in 1942:

"There are certain things in Christianity that can be understood from the outside, before you have become a Christian. But there are a great many things that cannot be understood until you have gone a certain distance along the Christian road...Whenever you find any statement in Christian writings which you can make nothing of, do not worry. Leave it alone. There will come a day, perhaps years later, when you suddenly see what it meant."

Believing in God is not easy because God is a hidden God. He is also a God of revelation: not fully in one moment, but over the course of a lifetime. Even St. Paul, who heard the Lord speaking to him on the road to Damascus, did not acquire a fully developed belief simply because of that one encounter, It took time and, more importantly, required the assistance of fellow travelers. Paul could not have made Damascus on his own - he couldn't, because he was blinded. He needed someone to lead him there. And then, when he arrived, someone had to take him in (reluctantly) and look after him.

If you are looking for proof of God's existence, then look no further than the lives of the saints around you - that was the name given to believers in the early Church. The Damascene Christian who took Paul in was taking a risk, since Paul was a persecutor of Christians. But out of faithfulness and

kindness he did what God required.

Those early Christians possessed the light of faith. Belief in God starts with recognizing that there is a light in people which expresses something more than what an individual can achieve for itself. It is seeing what one can achieve for others. It is to notice that there is a human potential for something beyond ourselves: the God gene, if you like, wired into our DNA, like an antennae picking up faint signals from afar. At first the signals are faint but which, over time, grow louder and louder until they can't be ignored any longer.

Am I talking about you, or about someone you know? A God believer is a God bearer. If you are a believer, your calling is to carry God into the world and let him be seen in you. Our greatness, which is to express the greatness of God, lies not in large acts of self-aggrandizement, but in small acts of love. For example, in visiting the lonely; in offering to do the shopping of someone who is housebound; in comforting the bereaved. Be one of the saints, and let God be alive through you.

And who knows, your witness to the faith may also be the signal to another, that there is in the world a power beyond ourselves, a power of love, compassion and goodness, whom we call "God".

May you carry the light of faith to another,

Father David

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## SUNDAY SERVICES

**8:00 am Holy Eucharist**

**9:30 am Sung Eucharist**

To view the service virtually, visit the website:

<https://www.messiahgwynedd.org/>

Sunday Bulletin can be found

[here](#)

Visit our Website

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## OFFICE HOURS:

*Monday through Friday 9:30-2:30*

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# FOLLOW US!!



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## IN CASE OF A PASTORAL EMERGENCY

Please contact The Rev. David Beresford: 302-468-9062

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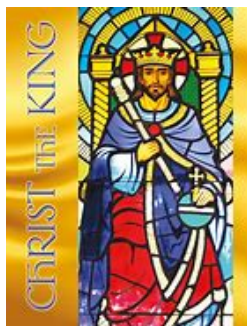
Church Calendar



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## Announcements

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### Word into Life

There will be no session next week. Word into Life resumes on Wednesday, May 8 at 7:00 pm, where the subject will be [Christ the King](#) on the theme of judgement.

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### Annual Meeting

Church of the Messiah holds its annual meeting in the church hall after the 9:30 am Sung Eucharist on Sunday, May 5 at 11:00 am. Bagels and Donuts and Coffee will be provided!



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### Celtic Eucharist

Feast of the Ascension, Thursday, May 9 at



7:00 pm. Music performed by Hannah Albrecht and Mindy Cutcher.

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## Mother's Day

There will be a special Sung Eucharist on Sunday, May 12 at 9:30 am, with readings by the children of Messiah.



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## Prayer Shawl Anniversary

The Prayer Shawl Ministry is celebrating its 15th anniversary this week with the blessing of its 1207th shawl. Our small, dedicated group's membership has fluctuated over the years as we've mourned the passing of several members, but a core of 8 women continue our ministry, knitting all the shawls which have been given with prayers of comfort, support, healing and love. They've been given to those who are ill, those who grieve, and those who celebrate - baptisms, graduations, and weddings. If you or a loved one would like to receive a shawl, please contact Nancy Alpert-Sisson (215-285-0331) or Edie Amey (215-512-8015), or the church office.



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## Messiah Meals - Update! Please read!

The Outreach Committee has experienced a scheduling conflict. Please note that Messiah Meals food prep in the church kitchen was supposed to take place on 4/30. It has been cancelled. Instead, "church cooks" will meet on Tuesday, June 11th at 5:00 PM. We recognize this is quite a delay.



But, the need for prepared meals for the hungry doesn't stop. So....kits prepared at home are still welcome. Please deliver them to the church freezer anytime up until 5/11. Wouldn't it be fantastic if we actually fill the freezer so much that we need to make two runs to Caring for Friends? Additional "at home kits" will be available in the Narthex.

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### **Outreach Request**

**The last day to bring needed cleaning supplies is still 4/30. They will be delivered to Family Promise shortly thereafter.**

Family Promise is based in Ambler. Their mission is to address homelessness and hunger. Last year, they provided a safe place to sleep and healthy food to 2,384 people. And..... 100% of families who completed their program found permanent homes! They are in need of products for Spring cleaning. They have requested dishwasher detergent tablets, laundry detergent tablets, glass cleaner, multipurpose cleaner, tall kitchen garbage bags, dish soap and hand soaps with pump dispensers. If you could grab some of these items during your next shopping trip, it would be greatly appreciated. A collection box is in the Narthex.

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### **Altar Flower Spaces Available**

There are lots of openings for Altar Flowers for Winter. Please contact the office if you would like to honor a loved one with altar flowers. The suggested donation is \$75.

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### **The Prayer Book**

A book with a white cover and cross can be found at the back of the church. In the book please write the names of those who are sick in body, mind or spirit or in any kind of need. Their names will be included the following week in the prayers of the people.



Those whose names are entered will be prayed for on Sundays and by members of our prayer chain. Along with their names, please also write the current date. After four weeks - or before if requested - their name will be removed from the prayer list. To continue to include them on the prayer list, after four weeks their name must be entered again in the book.

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## BIRTHDAYS IN THE WEEK AHEAD

O God, our times are in your hands: Look with favor, we pray, on these your servants as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

- Mike Clement
  - John Herninko
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## Photos for Social Media

We frequently take photographs in and around the church that may appear on our social media account, website and print materials. If you do not wish to be in photos, please contact the church office, and we will be sure to respect your wishes!

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# Church School News

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This past Sunday the children heard the story from John 4:1-42, of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. They will learn that Jesus helps people be friends.

This week they will hear the story in Mark 2:1-12, about the friends who lowered their friend who was paralyzed through the roof so Jesus would heal him. They will see that friends can help others follow Jesus.

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Put Mother's Day on your calendars!! This will be the annual children's service, where the kids will participate in a variety of ways at

the 9:30 service. Let Ciara know if you will be there!

[cprezuhy@gmail.com](mailto:cprezuhy@gmail.com) More info to follow!!

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## Search Committee

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### Update

As we progress with the interview process, we ask the Messiah Community to lift up our church, the members of the committee, and the candidates, so that we are open to God's lead.

Pray for our search committee:

Almighty God, you know the needs of your Church in every place.

Guide the Search Committee as they continue to be faithful in seeking your will.

Bless them with mutual trust, respect, and foresight as they lead us in the next phase of the Church of Messiah's legacy.

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## What's Going On Around Messiah

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**Harmony Theater is a creative performance environment for people with disabilities.**

They have several shows throughout the year at Messiah. For more information or to purchase tickets, click here:

[Show and Ticket Info | HarmonyTheaterInc](#)



## Parishioner Spotlight

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## Belfry Bargains News

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**Where do the proceeds from Belfry go?**





*ALL of the proceeds from Belfry Bargains are donated to causes and agencies outside the parish. Every dollar raised through the sale of clothing and other goods donated to Belfry are given to support and benefit those in need within our local community, as well as across the country and the world.*

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## Sunday Worship

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### MULTIPLE WAYS TO JOIN US FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP

Thanks to the wonders of modern technology and the hard work of several parishioners, we are able to offer a variety of ways to participate in Sunday services:

- **IN-PERSON** – 8:00 and 9:30
- **LIVE-STREAMED** - the 9:30 service will be broadcast on YouTube – follow the link posted on the church website ([messiahgwynedd.org](http://messiahgwynedd.org))
- **WEBSITE** – at the close of the service, a video will be posted to the parish website ([messiahgwynedd.org](http://messiahgwynedd.org)) for viewing at a time convenient for you

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## Reaching Out to the Community

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### SUPPORT MANNA ON MAIN STREET

#### *We Continue to Collect & Deliver Non-Perishable Items*

As you do your weekly shopping, please pick up some non-perishable food items, toiletries and cleaning supplies. These donations can be left on the back pew of the church or left outside the Rector's office door. These will then be delivered to Manna to stock their shelves for distribution to meet clients' needs.



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## Creative Angels

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Asian themed dishes seem to be quite popular. It appears people like the flavors, the ease of preparation and the crispy texture of fresh

vegetables. I found and tried this recipe for Crock Pot Chicken Chow Mein. I was pleasantly surprised! It made quite a bit so I had leftovers.

Enjoy!  
Barbara

### Crock Pot Chicken Chow Mein

1 Tbsp vegetable oil  
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (cut into 1" pieces)  
2 medium carrots, sliced diagonally  
2 medium stalks celery, coarsely chopped  
1 medium onion, chopped  
Small amount minced garlic  
1 8oz can water chestnuts, drained  
1 cup chicken broth  
2 Tbsp soy sauce  
1/2 tsp finely chopped ginger root  
2 Tbsp cornstarch  
3 Tbsp cold water  
1 cup fresh mushrooms  
1 cup snow pea pods  
Chow mein noodles

In 10" skillet, heat oil over medium high heat. Cook chicken in oil for 5 minutes, turning once, until brown. Spray slow cooker with cooking spray. In slow cooker, place carrots, celery, garlic and water chestnuts; top with chicken. In a small bowl, mix broth, soy sauce and ginger root; pour over chicken. Cover; cook on low heat 6 - 8 hours. In a small bowl, mix cornstarch and water until smooth; stir into chicken mixture. Stir in mushrooms and pea pods. Increase heat setting to high. Cover; cook 15 minutes longer. Serve over noodles.



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## The Parish Prayer

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Please join with me as we pray for Messiah in this time of transition:

Almighty God, you know the needs of your Church in every place: look graciously upon us, the people of Church of the Messiah, and grant us the guidance of your Holy Spirit as we move through this time of transition.

Give us discernment, wisdom, and confidence in your timing.

Guide the Warden, officers and members of the Vestry, and leaders of our faith community as they labor to be faithful in seeking your will.

We pray for the life of our parish, that we may continue to be strengthened in our mission to be Jesus Christ's heart, hands, and feet to our neighbors no matter where they are on their journey of faith.

Bless us with mutual trust and respect, courage, and foresight as you shepherd our community through this next course of our journey.

Grace us with continuous direction and inspire us toward genuine self-reflection.

All this we ask as we walk in your ways to the glory that awaits us in your name.

Amen.

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Church of the Messiah  
[www.messiahgwynedd.org](http://www.messiahgwynedd.org)

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