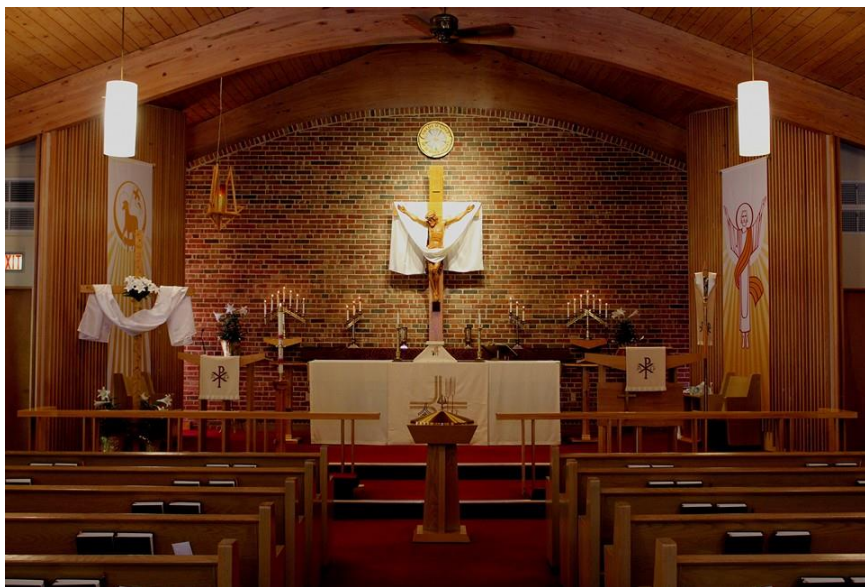


# **+++Art in Service to the Confession of Christ's Church at Messiah Lutheran Church+++**



The sacred art used in the sanctuary of Messiah Lutheran Church has been chosen to make a confession of our holy Christian faith. As St. Paul says, we “take every thought captive,” (2 Cor. 10:5) and “set our minds of things above” (Col. 3:2). This includes our “body and soul, eyes, ears, and all [our] members, [our] reason and all [our] senses,” which God has created and given (Small Catechism, The Creed, Article 1). This booklet is offered as a means by which our members and visitors may draw nearer to Christ through a solid, biblical confession of the faith.

## **+Four Chief Parts+**

The art in our sanctuary may be divided, generally, into four chief parts: The south wall Days of Creation series as Part 1; the east wall chancel as Part 2; the north wall Church Year Series as Part 3; and the west wall Catechism Series as Part 4.

These parts first teach us that our Christian faith fills, symbolically, all the points of the compass in our Christian life. Just as God’s love through Jesus Christ surrounds us, going before and coming after us, so does the confession of our faith.

Secondly, they teach us about the triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who God is, what He has done and continues to do, and what our response to His working in our lives is. The Days of Creation point us to the First Article of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth..." God the Father, our Creator, has made us and all creatures and still takes care of us (see Luther's Small Catechism, The Creed, Article 1).

The chancel brings us out of creation, where our sins have separated us from God's holiness, to the new creation of Christ, given to His people through Word and Sacrament. Our Lord Jesus Christ has redeemed us by His holy, innocent, bitter suffering and death upon the cross, which is the focal point of everything in our sanctuary. From the cross, we receive the blessings of Christ's salvation through the altar, the font, and the pulpit. Christ is not far off, but draws near to us by the means of grace that we "may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness..." (Luther's Small Catechism, The Creed, Article 2).

From the chancel, we live out this ongoing "year of grace" in the Church Year. The Holy Spirit has "called [us] by the Gospel, enlightened [us] with His gifts, sanctified and kept [us] in the true faith" (Luther's Small Catechism, The Creed, Article 3). The Spirit teaches us by His Word through His Church to receive with thanksgiving the gifts of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This faith is ours, and we confess it back to God and to the world as we leave the sanctuary beneath the Catechism shields on the western wall. We live and grow in this faith throughout our lives, trusting that God who has begun a good work will bring it to completion on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:6).

## **+Days of Creation Icons+**

As we gather in our sanctuary, we do so in God's created world. He created this world, as He has revealed to us in Genesis chapters 1 and 2, in seven days. God saw all that He created and declared that it was "very good." The first sin of disobedience committed by Adam and Eve against God's one command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil has forever barred all mankind from Paradise. These icons are a reminder to all who

gather here that God's Word is truth and we believe it without reservation. They also remind us that we are in the world, which was created for our benefit and was made "very good," but we are no longer of this world because of our sin, which has tainted it. We are also reminded that we come to God not by our own merit or righteousness. We, along with our first parents, have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. God has had mercy on us through the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is so beautifully portrayed in our crucifix behind the altar, and given to us through the font, pulpit, and altar in Word and Sacrament.

### **+Days of Creation in Detail-Our Lord Jesus Christ+**

Most of the days of creation icons are pretty self-explanatory, but there are a few details that deserve a closer look. The first detail that is common to all the icons is our Lord Jesus Christ. We confess with Holy Scripture that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:1-5) So, of course our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, is present at every stage of creation. You may notice that the halo around our Lord's head in each icon has the Greek letters "w on;" this is a further confession of the eternal deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Greek letters are the very words "I AM" which our Lord uses throughout the Gospels to reveal His divinity to His hearers. This "I AM" title is connected with the Holy Name of God YHWH (the tetragrammaton) first revealed to Moses by God in the burning bush (Exodus 3). Additionally, off to the side of our Lord are the Greek letters IC XC. These are simply the initials of Jesus Christ in the Greek. There can be no doubt, then, about who this character is or what He is doing.

In each icon, our Lord is dressed in the same way: a blue outer robe covering a red inner robe. This is a confession of the two natures of Christ, the blue reminding us of His heavenly nature, and the red reminding us of His human nature. Our Lord is also

always holding a scroll in each of the icons (except for the Seventh Day) reminding us that His works are revealed to us in Holy Scripture that we may be sure of who He is and what He is doing for His people.



### +The First Day+

The icon for the first day is very interesting in that it presents us with an image we may not be familiar with. God created light, from nothing, at the mere command of His Word, but what was the source of that light? The sun, moon, and stars aren't created until the fourth day, so what is this light's source? Many early Jewish and Christian teachers believed that the creation of light on the first day was also the creation of the angelic hosts. Here we see that ancient teaching in the disc of light

which eclipses the deep, chaotic darkness.



### +The Second Day+

The icon for the second day is very straightforward, as we read in Genesis 1:6-8 “<sup>6</sup>And God said, ‘Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.’ <sup>7</sup>And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. <sup>8</sup>And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.”



## +The Third Day+

This icon beautifully depicts the gathering of the waters from the land and the creation of vegetation on the third day of creation as recorded in Genesis 1:9-13 “<sup>9</sup> And God said, ‘Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.’ And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup> And God said, ‘Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding

seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.’ And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.”



## +The Fourth Day+

Why did the light come before the sun, moon, and stars? The answer to this is to topple all the false gods of the peoples throughout history. The heavenly bodies have always captured people’s devotion and inspired false and ungodly worship. To show God’s preeminent power over all creation in heaven and on earth, the sun, moon, and stars are here shown as mere servants. They do not create light; they have no power except that which God has given them. They are merely



servants. Therefore, the iconographer has depicted the sun and moon with human features, a reminder that these created elements are not greater than man and must not be worshipped over God.



## +The Fifth Day+

The icon for the fifth day of creation depicts the creation of the sea creatures and birds, as recorded in Genesis 1:20-23 “<sup>20</sup> And God said, ‘Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.’”<sup>21</sup> So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.”<sup>22</sup> And God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful

and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.’”<sup>23</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.”



## +The Sixth Day+

The creation of man on the sixth day is perhaps one of the most subtly beautiful and theologically full icons in the series. Of particular note in this icon are the faces of Christ and Adam. They are identical. Man is, after all, made in the image of God, and Christ is God in the flesh. Who else would Adam look like? But there is a deeper theological significance here as well. “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made

alive (1 Corinthians 15:22).” Even in His perfect creation of man, God, in His omniscience, knew what the outcome would be: Adam would sin and death would come into the world through that sin. So here we see already, before the transgression has occurred, the solution to Adam’s problem: Christ! To further emphasize this, we see behind Adam’s head two sheep, one white and one black. The white sheep obscures the black sheep. The white sheep is resolutely looking to Christ, while the black sheep shamefully hangs his head, looking down to Adam. Christ is the perfect lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, even before sin had reared its ugly head.



### +The Seventh Day+

The final day of creation is the day of Sabbath, God’s rest from His labors. In this icon there is a very subtle foreshadowing of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. He sits enthroned in His heavenly domain between three trees. We have only been told specifically about two trees in the creation account: the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. What is this third tree? How is this third tree related to the Sabbath of our Lord? It is none other than the Tree of the Cross,

upon which our Lord completed all His work for our salvation, then rested in the tomb until His glorious resurrection for our justification.

## +The Expulsion from the Garden+

The final icon in the Days of Creation series is the expulsion from the Garden of Eden, as recorded in Genesis 3. It serves as an important reminder to all who are gathered into Christ's Church that we come before His holy altar with our sins, which He covers with His offering on the cross, just as God covered the sinful nakedness of Adam and Eve with the skins of sacrificed beasts as they were cast out of Paradise.



## +The Church Year Series+

We come into the Church from the fallen creation, through the blood and righteousness of Christ as new creatures. Our lives are now governed and measured by the year of Grace; the Church Year.



## +Advent+

The shield for the season of Advent is on a deep violet field; violet being the color of royalty, signifying Christ's Messianic and eternal kingdom, as well as the color of penitence, reminding us how we ought to prepare ourselves to receive our coming King. In the center of the shield is a golden Star of David with the Holy Name of

God, first revealed to Moses at the burning bush. This teaches us



that Christ, who comes to us humbly in human flesh and blood, is of one substance with the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God. He is the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophesy, and the eternal heir promised from the line of King David. At the bottom of the shield is a stump, from which is growing a new and tender shoot. On this shoot are 12 leaves, teaching us that Jesus is all of the tribes of Israel condensed into One, who would bear the sins of all of them, and reminding us of the 12 apostles, to whose teaching we are devoted. Jesus is the shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit (Isaiah 11:1). He is the Vine which God has established in His eternal vineyard and we are the branches, grafted on by faith.



### +Christmas+

The shield for Christmas has a field of gold, to teach us to value highly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ and the mercy God has bestowed on us by His nativity. The Virgin Mother beholds the wonder of God in the flesh and blood of the Child of promise she has borne. She herself teaches us to value the gifts of Christ and to treasure them in our

hearts. The Christ Child lays swaddled in the lowly manger, a halo of uncreated light around His holy head. Above His head is the Greek word for “the Word,” as in the Word of God who was in the beginning, who is God, and who has been made flesh for us poor miserable sinners. The ox and donkey keep vigil at their Creator’s side, as was foretold by the prophet Isaiah: “The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master’s crib, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.” (Isaiah 1:3) Jesus Christ has come to recreate what was lost by Adam.



## +Epiphany+

The shield for Epiphany is on a midnight blue field. A metallic silver eight-pointed star breaks the darkness of the night. In the center of the star are the Greek initials for Jesus Christ, in a blood red. This teaches us that Jesus is the Light of the world who shines in the darkness, though the darkness perceived Him not. The

eight points of the star teach us two things: one, that the gospel light of Jesus Christ shines to all corners of the earth and two, that by His Epiphany, the eighth day of new creation has come to interrupt the death and decay brought into the world by the sin of Adam and Eve. The initials of Christ's name are a deep, blood red, teaching us that His Epiphany is not some spiritual feeling, but a real, historical, flesh and blood event.



## +Lent+

The Lenten season shield is on a deep violet field, again, as in Advent, teaching us to value Christ's kingdom, which comes by His holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death and to prepare ourselves for that kingdom of mercy in penitence and sorrow for our sins. The outer edge of the shield is circled by a golden crown of thorns, teaching us that

Christ's kingdom truly comes through His humility and passion. In the center is a gold cross outlined in red. In the four corners of the cross are the Greek letters for Jesus Christ, Conqueror. He has

conquered sin, death, and the devil by His cross for us.



### +Holy Week+

The shield for Holy Week is on scarlet field. A banner with the festal shout of Hosanna is wrapped around the gold cross in the center over the victor's palm. We are taught by this shield that the suffering and passion of Christ (brought to mind by the scarlet) are the means by which He has answered the people's prayer of Hosanna (Save us

now!). It is through the cross that Christ is our King and has won for us the victory over sin, death, and the devil. This shield will also be used for any commemorations or feasts of the Holy Martyrs.



### +Easter+

The shield for Easter is on a golden field. Circling the shield is a thorny branch, from which has bloomed a white rose. The gold reminds us that this great Paschal Feast is the most precious and glorious of our Church calendar. The thorns bring to mind our Lord's holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death, without which there would

be no Easter victory. The white rose has great symbolic value. There are five petals, calling to mind the five wounds of our Lord.

Between these petals grow verdant leaves, teaching us that by His stripes we have been healed and now grow, as branches connected to The Vine. In the center of the rose are three golden stamens.

These teach us to treasure greatly Christ's three-day rest in the tomb, for by it, He has sanctified all our graves to merely be places of rest, from which we will rise to new life. Circling all of this is the great Paschal acclamation: Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!



### +Pentecost+

The shield for Pentecost is on a red field. The Holy Spirit descends as a dove upon Christ's Church, shining the bright rays of the Gospel light upon us, bringing to mind all that Christ has taught and done.



### +Trinity+

The shield for the Trinity season is on a field of green. In the center is the Greek monogram for Christ (chi rho) in gold. On either side are the Greek letters alpha and omega. This shield teaches us that as we hear the Word and receive the sacraments in Christ's Church, our faith grows (signified by the green) in the truth and grace of

Christ, who is the beginning and end of our faith.





## +All Saints+

The final shield for the church year series is the shield for All Saints' and the End Time. The Lamb sits on His throne, which is overflowing with His precious blood: the preservation of His saints the weapon of His angels against the devil. We are reminded of the dual reality of our life in the Church: though we are

surrounded by the realities and cares of this world, we have our eyes fixed upon our future home and glory in Christ. As we gather every Lord's Day, this reality is carried out at the altar where Christ, the Lamb of God, gives His body and blood for His saints, who are gathered in all times and places "with angels, and archangels and all the company of heaven..."

## +The Catechism Series+

Having been nurtured by God's Word year in and year out in this church year of grace, we are given the good confession of Christ's Church, rightly taught and confessed in Luther's Small Catechism. This faith is our own.



It is fitting that at the center of the Catechism series is Luther's Rose. The great reformer designed the well-known seal as a teaching tool and a confession of the evangelical faith. No better explanation can be presented than Luther's own, which is as follows: Grace and peace from the Lord. As you desire to know



whether my painted seal, which you sent to me, has hit the mark, I shall answer most amiably and tell you my original thoughts and reason about why my seal is a symbol of my theology. The first should be a black cross in a heart, which retains its natural color, so that I myself would be reminded that faith in the Crucified saves us. "For one who believes from the heart will be justified" (Romans 10:10). Although it is indeed a black cross, which mortifies and which should also cause pain, it leaves the heart in its natural color. It does not corrupt nature, that is, it does not kill but keeps alive. "The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17) but by faith in the crucified. Such a heart should stand in the middle of a white rose, to show that faith gives joy, comfort, and peace. In other words, it places the believer into a white, joyous rose, for this faith does not give peace and joy like the world gives (John 14:27). That is why the rose should be white and not red, for white is the color of the spirits and the angels (cf. Matthew 28:3; John 20:12). Such a rose should stand in a sky-blue field, symbolizing that such joy in spirit and faith is a beginning of the heavenly future joy, which begins already, but is grasped in hope, not yet revealed. And around this field is a golden ring, symbolizing that such blessedness in Heaven lasts forever and has no end. Such blessedness is exquisite, beyond all joy and goods, just as gold is the most valuable, most precious, and best metal. This is my compendium theologiae [summary of theology]. I have wanted to show it to you in good friendship, hoping for your appreciation. May Christ, our beloved Lord, be with your spirit until the life hereafter. Amen.

In addition to this thorough explanation, our Luther's Rose has the following: around the rose itself is the Latin *VIVIT*, that is "He Lives." As Scripture says, so we confess, Christ "was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification" (Romans 4:25). Also in the four corners of the cross in the center of the heart are the Latin initials for the great rallying cry of the Reformation, our *Sola Scriptura*, *VDMA: Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum*, "but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you." (I Peter 1:25)



**The Ten Commandments Shield** portrays the historical reality of God (portrayed by the tetragrammaton in the burning bush) giving His Holy Law to Moses from the heights of Mt. Sinai, as well as the theological reality of Christ, the Son of God, very God and very God, fulfilling that Law perfectly for us through his

holy, perfect sacrifice upon Mt. Calvary.

As the Church sings, “You have this Law to see therein/That you have not been free from sin,/But also that you clearly see/How pure toward God life should be./ Have mercy, Lord!

Our works cannot salvation gain/They merit only endless pain./Forgive us, Lord, to Christ we flee,/Who plead for us, endlessly./Have mercy, Lord! (Lutheran Service Book, 581:11,12).



**The Creed Shield** artfully and beautifully depicts what can never be fully and perfectly depicted: the mystery of the Holy Trinity, “that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in unity” (Athanasian Creed). The three persons of the Trinity are depicted in interlacing circles: God the Father by the creative and blessing hand with the Holy Name

(tetragrammaton); God the Son, the victorious, but wounded Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, also with the Holy Name; and God the Spirit as the dove from Christ’s baptism in the

Jordan, also named with the tetragrammaton.

Though three in person, this One true God is united in the mystery that is never fully known. The interlacing circles as well as the triangle behind them illustrate the mystery of the God in Trinity and the Trinity in unity.



## **The Lord's Prayer Shield**

depicts at its center the hand of God, open in blessing (which is fulfilled in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ). This hand is surrounded by the cross nimbus, or halo, another reminder of the saving work of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which we may make our requests known to God, who is now our

Heavenly Father.

The hands at either side represent the whole Christian Church, in heaven and on earth, and acknowledge that all continually offer up the sweet smell of their prayers (shown by the smoking thurible) "as dear children ask their dear Father" (Luther's Small Catechism, The Lord's Prayer: Introduction).

We may only offer God-pleasing prayer in the name of Jesus, who has taught us to pray "Our Father..."



**The Baptism Shield** simply depicts the gifts that the Holy Triune God gives in the waters of Holy Baptism: It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare. The promise from Holy Scripture from 1 Peter 3:21: "Baptism now saves you,"

circumscribes the shield in gold letters. This is a holy and precious promise and blessing God gives to His people.

The shell symbolizes new life in these baptismal waters: life that is protected and surrounded by the sure Word of God.

The three drops falling from the shell call to mind that Christians are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, even as Christ our Lord commanded in Matthew 28.

Behind the shell is an endless sea. Our baptism into Christ is not a one time event, or a little puddle, but a flood of God's mercy, in which our enemies (sin, death, and the devil) are drowned, just as Pharoah's chariots and his host were drowned in the Red Sea, while God's people crossed safely into the promised land.

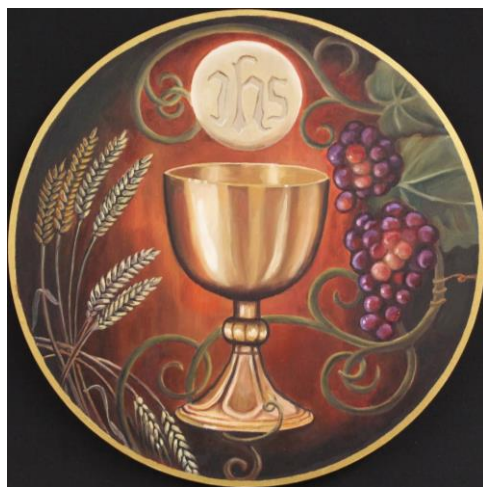


**The Shield for Confession and Absolution** is centered on the clear and open Word and Promise of God from the Gospel of St. John, chapter 20. The Office of the Keys, to bind and loose sins, have been given to the Church by our Lord Jesus Christ to be used by His called and ordained servants (symbolized by the

penitential stole in the background.)

We have this promise from God Himself: no matter how big our sins, all who believe in Christ and call out in repentance have that sure forgiveness won by Him upon the cross.

But any who stubbornly cling to their sin or refuse Christ and His mercy will be bound to their sin and forgiveness will be withheld.



The final shield for the Catechism series depicts the **Sacrament of the Altar**. Here we see the host, that is the bread, inscribed with the initials of Jesus' holy name. Here, at Jesus' eternal and true Word, we receive His own body. Beneath the host stands the chalice, which, at God's promise and command, pours out for Christ's Church His sacred

blood, shed for the forgiveness of sins.

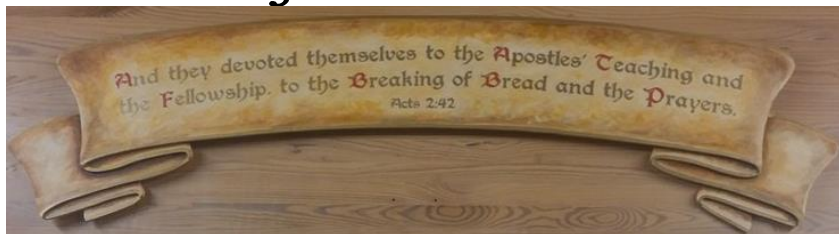
All who by faith believe God's promise in the Eucharist receive the "true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat



and to drink” (Luther’s Small Catechism, The Lord’s Prayer: What is the Sacrament of the Altar?) to their blessing. All who disbelieve receive the same body and blood, but to their judgement (1 Corinthians 11:29).

Christ gathers His Church together in unity even as grains of wheat are gathered to make one loaf of bread and individual grapes are gathered into one cup of wine.

## +++ Why Do We Gather? +++



Finally, an additional series of art outside of our sanctuary reminds us of who we are as Christians, why we gather around Word and Sacrament, and who gathers with us.

The lovely banner, crafted by two of our members, reminds all who enter that we are devoted to the Apostles’ teaching in Holy Scripture, the fellowship of believers, the breaking of bread at the Lord’s Altar where He gives us His true Body and Blood for the forgiveness of sins, and the prayers, which have their answer fulfilled in Christ Jesus.

On either side of this banner are the shields of the Apostles, a gift from Redeemer Lutheran Church in Racine at their closing, which reminds us of the historic reality of their lives and deaths.

## +++The Shields of the Apostles+++

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### +Saint Peter+



Peter was also known as Simon or Cephas. He was the brother of Andrew. He became the leading Apostle after Pentecost until the Council of Jerusalem in 50 A.D. Afterward his whereabouts are not known with certainty.

Peter was crucified in Rome under Nero. An ancient historian records that he asked to be crucified upside down because he felt unworthy to be crucified as his Lord. The keys represent Jesus' saying, "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

St. Peter's Day is June 29.

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### +Saint Andrew+



Andrew was the brother of Peter. He is said to have founded the church in Russia. He is the patron saint of both Russia and Scotland.

Tradition holds that Andrew was crucified in Greece on a cross saltire.

Saint Andrew's Day is November 30.

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### +Saint James the Greater+



James was the brother of John and a son of Zebedee. He traditionally preached in Spain after working in Jerusalem.

James was beheaded by Herod Agrippa. He is the only apostle whose death is recorded in scripture (Acts 12:2). His shield shows a scallop (or cockle) shell, a symbol of

pilgrimage by sea, and the sword of martyrdom. Sometimes three shells are shown without a sword.

St. James' the Greater's Day is July 25.

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### **+Saint John+**



John was the bishop of the church at Ephesus. He was exiled to Patmos and then returned.

Tradition claims that John was the only disciple to die a natural death, at great age. Various attempts were made on his life, including a poisoned chalice from which he was miraculously spared.

St. John's Day is December 27.

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### **+Saint Philip+**



A questionable tradition holds that Philip was a missionary to Phrygia and Galatia.

Philip is said to have been martyred by crucifixion or the spear, or bound to a cross and stoned to death. Two loaves of bread recall Philip's comment at the feeding of the multitude recorded in John 6:7.

St. Philip's Day is May 1.

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### **+Saint Jude+**



Jude was also known as Thaddeus.

Traditions vary as to his field of missionary work. he is reputed to have traveled with Simon. His manner of death is also unknown, though some have supposed that he and Simon were martyred together.

St. Jude's Day is October 28.

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### **+Saint Bartholomew+**



Bartholomew probably preached near the border of India and in Armenia.

According to tradition, Bartholomew was flayed alive, crucified, and then beheaded.

Saint Bartholomew's Day is August 24.

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### **+Saint Thomas+**



Thomas was an evangelist in Persia and India. In India he is reported to have built a church with his own hands.

Thomas died when he was shot with arrows, stoned, and left to die. A priest then ran a spear through him.

St. Thomas' Day is December 21.

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### +Saint James the Less+



James (called "The Less" or "The Just") was a son of Alphaeus. He worked in and near Jerusalem and was probably its first bishop.

An ancient historian claims that James was pushed from a pinnacle of the temple at the age of 96. Near death, he rose to ask forgiveness for his enemies, who then beat him with a fuller's bat and sawed his body in pieces.

Saint James' Day is May 1.

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### +Saint Matthew+



Matthew was a son of Alphaeus and a tax collector. He was also known as Levi. According to tradition, he went to Ethiopia after preaching to the Jews in Palestine.

Traditional accounts of Matthew's death vary. Some say he died a natural death. Others say that he was crucified in Ethiopia and was then beheaded. His shield displays three purses.

St. Matthew's Day is September 21.

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### +Saint Simon+



This disciple was also known as Simon the Zealot. Nothing of his missionary work can be authenticated, but he is variously said to have worked east of Palestine or to have accompanied Jude in his journeys.

An early historian claims that Simon was martyred in Persia by being beheaded or sawn in pieces. His shield indicates that he was a fisher of men through preaching the



gospel.

St. Simon's Day is October 28.

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**+Saint Matthias+**



Matthias was the apostle chosen by lot to take Judas' place as one of the twelve.

Tradition holds that he worked in Judea or Ethiopia. He is said to have been stoned and then beheaded.

St. Matthias' Day is February 24.

Our congregation has been incredibly blessed by the addition of these pieces of catechetical art. It is our hope that the teachings they represent will be a continual blessing to our congregation and all who gather here for many generations.

**+++Solī Deo Gloria++**

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All Scripture references are from the English Standard Version.