

Local Church Needs to Raise Another \$90,000 in 33 Days

Messiah Lutheran Church is important to the community

Joliet, IL - October 12, 2023 – Messiah Lutheran Church in Joliet is just over two-thirds of the way to raising the demand it faces of \$300,000 from the Securities and Exchange Commission. Help is still needed to raise the remaining \$90,000 before November 15, 2023 to keep this church open and active in the community.

Messiah has a long 120-year history. If Messiah is forced to close its doors, not only will its members suffer, so will the community. “We partner with local charities, and we give to local charities. That would cease if Messiah Lutheran Church were not here,” says Kurt Hoover, Senior Pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church. “When I ask myself why God would put us through this, I see people reconnecting to church. Thousands in our community have been forced to ask if they care if a church closes. I think many were surprised to find out that they do. We all expect the church to be there if we need it. Well, it turns out if you are not there and involved, it may not be there when you need it.”

Church facing judgement despite no fault of its own

After a nearly 3-year legal battle, Messiah is facing a judgment against the church, demanding \$187,000 be paid immediately and the remaining \$300,000 be paid by November 15, 2023. **All this, despite no wrongdoing and no accusation of wrongdoing by the church.** The church received \$780,000 in donations over a 10-year span from a congregational member’s business. That business was charged with illegal activities and the Securities and Exchange Commission, through a Receiver, demanded repayment of these funds. Messiah could not repay the funds because it no longer has them after using them to grow its ministry, help the community and for the operating needs of the church. The state of Illinois does not have any laws in place to prevent or

limit claw back of donations given to non-profit organizations in this situation. No Illinois charities are safe!

Messiah supports the community

The YMCA is one of Messiah's community partners. Messiah is a host location for several of the YMCA's programs throughout the year. Patty Hall, Executive Director of the Galowich Family YMCA in Joliet, says, "Our community needs Messiah Lutheran Church. We need a place where people feel like they're at home, they're together, they're a family. And that's what Messiah Lutheran Church is to this community...". This judgement threatens the partnership Messiah has with the YMCA as well as the support it gives other community partners, like Morning Star Mission and Daybreak Shelter.

SaveMessiah.org – More Help is Needed

"We are grateful for the support we have received so far from the community and beyond. We are continuing to ask for help to raise the remaining \$90,000 to keep our church open and active in the community", says Brian Wielbik, President of Messiah's Church Council. "If we don't raise the \$300,000 by the deadline, another \$100,000 is tacked on and our assets are frozen, and we face the potential loss of our church building." The website, SaveMessiah.org has more information about the story and updates on the total amounts raised.

For further information, contact

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