



Janet L. All, 65, of Baton Rouge, La., stops for coffee at journeys at Messiah Lutheran Church in Midland County's Bullock Creek. She is spending the summer in Midland and stops for java at the church/coffee shop about three times a week.



Dan D. Lacher, 30, of Midland is manager at journeys. The coffee shop is an effort to reach young adults, say church leaders. It's a low-key approach, but Lacher says "with conversation, some people will eventually want to know more about Christ."

DIVINE DRIVE-THROUGH



A group called the Older Wiser Lutherans meet for coffee inside journeys.

BULLOCK CREEK — A Midland County church hopes offering bigger, better caffeine kicks to motorists buzzing past will boost its 2,300-member fellowship.

Messiah Lutheran Church has opened a drive-through coffee café at the church, 1550 S. Poseyville, as well as room for 18 inside.

The café — named journeys — offers a full line of Italian-style espressos, lattes, mochas, plus frozen drinks, pastries, cookies, Jones Soda and bottled water.

One full-time and four part-time employees plus a dozen volunteers staff the shop.

"People spend most of their time at home, at work and in their cars," said manager Dan D. Lacher, 30, of Midland who joined Messiah five years ago, "so it was crucial to develop new and interesting ways to reach out to them."

"People look to coffee not only as a morning staple, but a treat or a social event."

Messiah is among a growing number of churches across the country developing creative evangelism outreach that pairs houses of worship with franchises ranging from coffee cafés to restaurants.

Much of the effort is aimed at young professionals and others in the 18- to 24-year-old age demographic.

The primary goal is to get people through the door, say church officials.

The secondary goal is to offer good coffee to the community — something that isn't always synonymous with church.

To celebrate the opening of journeys, Messiah Lutheran's congregation is sponsoring a free concert featuring singer/songwriter Brett Mitchell at 7 p.m. Tuesday, July 31, in the café.

Messiah sells about 2,000 cups a month, Lacher said. Prices range from



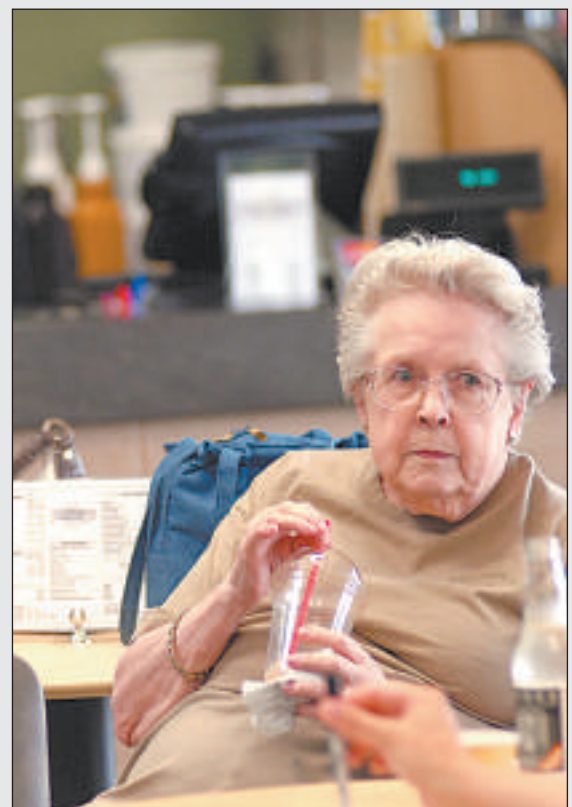
Lacher whips up a coffee concoction at journeys. To celebrate the shop's opening, Messiah Lutheran will sponsor a concert Tuesday, July 31, in the café.

\$1.45 for a small cup of coffee up to \$3.95 for a 20-ounce fruit smoothie.

The café is open from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday; 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday; and 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. to

8 p.m. Saturday. ♦

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Madalyn V. Northam, 79, of Midland enjoys a frappé with amaretto flavoring at journeys.

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