

*Messiah Lutheran Church  
Mechanicsville, Virginia*



*February 14, 2021  
Last Sunday after the Epiphany*

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

*To share the Good News of Jesus Christ  
and to invite all to join us in faith, worship, and service.*

## Last Sunday after the Epiphany

(February 14, 2021)

For video go to: <https://messiahmech.com/messiah-digital/>

### \*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose voice is upon the waters, whose mercy is poured out upon all people, whose goodness cascades over all creation.

**C: Amen**

P: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God.

P: Holy God,

**C: you search us and know us. You are acquainted with all our ways. We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin— our own sins and the broken systems that bind us. We turn inward, failing to follow your outward way of love. We distrust those who are not like us. We exploit the earth and its resources and fail to consider generations to come. Forgive us, gracious God, for all we have done and left undone. Even before the words are on our tongues, you know them; receive them in your divine mercy. Amen.**

P: How vast is God's grace! Through the power and promise of † Christ Jesus, our sins are washed away and we are claimed as God's own beloved. Indeed, we are forgiven. In the wake of God's forgiveness, we are called to be the beloved community living out Christ's justice and the Spirit's reconciling peace.

**C: Amen.**

### GATHERING HYMN How Good, Lord, to Be Here!



1 How good, Lord, to be here! Your glo - ry fills the night;  
2 How good, Lord, to be here, your beau - ty to be - hold  
3 Ful - fill - er of the past and hope of things to be,  
4 Be - fore we taste of death, we see your king - dom come;  
5 How good, Lord, to be here! Yet we may not re - main;



your face and gar - ments, like the sun, shine with un - bor - rowed light.  
where Mo - ses and E - li - jah stand, your mes - sen - gers of old.  
we hail your bod - y glo - ri - fied and our re - demp - tion see.  
we long to hold the vi - sion bright and make this hill our home.  
but since you bid us leave the mount, come with us to the plain.

## THE GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: ***And also with you.***

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray:

C: ***Almighty God, the resplendent light of your truth shines from the mountaintop into our hearts. Transfigure us by your beloved Son, and illumine the world with your image, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen***

## FIRST LESSON: 2 Kings 2:1-12

Lector

A reading from 2 Kings.

*Today's reading centers on the transfer of power and authority from the prophet Elijah to Elisha. Their travels, which retrace the path of Joshua back to Moab (the place where Moses died) and the parting of the waters, demonstrate that Elisha and Elijah are legitimate successors of the great prophet Moses.*

<sup>1</sup>Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. <sup>2</sup>Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. <sup>3</sup>The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent."

<sup>4</sup>Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here; for the LORD has sent me to Jericho." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they came to Jericho. <sup>5</sup>The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?" And he answered, "Yes, I know; be silent."

<sup>6</sup>Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. <sup>7</sup>Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. <sup>8</sup>Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground.

<sup>9</sup>When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit." <sup>10</sup>He responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." <sup>11</sup>As they

continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. <sup>12</sup>Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **SECOND LESSON: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6**

**Lector**

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

<sup>3</sup>Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. <sup>4</sup>In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. <sup>5</sup>For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup>For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **GOSPEL: Mark 9:2-9**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Mark.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Mark's gospel presents the transfiguration as a preview of what would become apparent to Jesus' followers after he rose from the dead. Confused disciples are given a vision of God's glory manifest in the beloved Son.*

<sup>2</sup>Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, <sup>3</sup>and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. <sup>4</sup>And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." <sup>6</sup>He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. <sup>7</sup>Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" <sup>8</sup>Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

<sup>9</sup>As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

Did you know that, when you see that splashing milk in the picture on the front of your box of cereal, it might actually be glue? You see, when you put cereal in milk, it soaks it up and sinks to the bottom. Not great for an advertising photoshoot. So, use glue! And you know that the thick juicy hamburger you see on the commercial is usually quite a bit flatter and drabber when you unwrap it at the drive-thru window. That, my friends, is because of hidden layers of cardboard and toothpicks to add some sturdiness, and, I kid you not, sometimes shoe polish to make the mostly raw patty look cooked. The syrup in the pancake commercial might be motor oil; the fruit in the grocery store flyer might be shiny because of spray-on deodorant or hairspray. Whipped cream melts – use shaving cream in that parfait! Foam on your beer doesn't last long enough – squirt in some dish soap! Ice cream melts, too – use dyed mashed potatoes! It's no wonder the actors in commercials are obviously only pretending to take a bite sometimes.

There are all sorts of tricks of the trade when it comes to advertising, long before you get the asterisks and disclaimers and speedy-voiced radio announcers telling you that the offer is void where prohibited. The tricks make sense – they want their products to look as amazing as possible so you'll want to buy them and eat them. But sometimes they just make it all look simply too good to be true. My Whopper is never going to look like they do in the commercial.

I almost felt like Mark snuck a commercial into the Gospel reading today – “And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them.” Stubborn stains from that last thrashing demon you cast out? Embarrassing ring around the tunic? Try Transfiguration Brand Bleach! So dazzling, they'll say it's a miracle!

Peter, James, and John go up on this mountain with Jesus, and out of nowhere he radiates this blinding white light. And Moses and Elijah are there, too, talking with him! How is this possible? What is happening? This is terrifying! And it's all simply too good to be true. Peter doesn't know what he's saying as the words spill out of his mouth, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” Peter wants to set up some tents, some booths, to keep this thing going. He doesn't want to let go of this experience, this too-good-to-be-true moment. It's like he knows that it just can't last.

And the reason he knows it can't last is because of what happened right before this Transfiguration experience. In the verses leading up to this dazzling scene, we have Jesus asking – “Who do you say that I am?” And Peter speaks up: “You are the Messiah.” Jesus then tells the disciples that he will undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

This seems, well, too bad to be true. And Peter rebukes Jesus – this can't be! And Jesus rebukes right back: "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." And then Jesus teaches the crowd about the costs of discipleship, and taking up their cross to follow him. And then, six days later, it's Transfiguration time.

And no sooner did the too-good-to-be-true shine and dazzle, the Messiah confirmed by the voice in the cloud booming out, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" – no sooner had Peter offered to set up some dwellings and remain in this moment – then the light went out again. Moses and Elijah were gone. No dwellings required. No staying in that moment. Back down the mountain, where in the next verses a crowd and a demon-possessed boy were waiting, where disciples couldn't heal him on their own, back down towards their limitations, towards Jerusalem and the cross and their powerlessness to stop Jesus' death and the too-bad-to-be-true.

When they come down the mountain, Jesus orders the trio of disciples to tell no one about what they have seen until after he has risen from the dead. After Peter confesses that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus there too "sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him." Last week, Jesus casts out the demon and orders it to be silent after it says, "I know who you are, the Holy One of God." Why does Jesus keep telling people to be quiet in Mark's Gospel? I think it's because he knows how much we desire to hold on to the things that seem so good, even too good to be true. Jesus knows how much we want to dwell in the mountain-top experiences and never come down. Jesus knows the story of Elijah and Elisha, and how difficult it was for Elisha to stay behind, how he cried out "Father, father!" and tore his own clothes as his mentor and friend was taken up in that whirlwind.

Jesus knew, and had told the disciples, that he would die, and be raised. But he knew that there would be pain in the parting, both on the cross and after the ascension. Jesus knew – and still knows – that we human beings want to hold on to what is good. But he teaches us to give our goodness away for the love of our neighbors. Jesus knew – and still knows – that we human beings want to build dwellings. But it is Jesus who came down to dwell with us, and Jesus keeps us moving, dwelling in motion and love and service, down off of mountains and into a world of need. There is indeed a cost to discipleship. There is pain and there are partings in this life. But they are bearable after the resurrection, in light of the new life Jesus brings. And while the Transfiguration moments light the way, we can't focus solely on them, or we'll be blinded to the cross we're tasked to bear, and the path our Savior bids us follow. That's why Ash Wednesday and Lent begin just three days from now. Once again, it's a both-and.

The gospel might seem too good to be true; but God isn't a marketing firm. In reality, the good news isn't too good to be true; it's actually better than we realize, because Jesus walks with us in the valleys and doesn't just dwell on the mountaintop. It's better than we realize, because Jesus' light shines in less

dazzling ways in the daily darkneses. Jesus dwells with us through it all, including the limitations and the disappointments and the lonely cross-strewn hills.

In his explanation of the third article of the Apostle's Creed in the Small Catechism, Martin Luther says, "I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, made me holy and kept me in the true faith, just as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one common, true faith." Jesus' light doesn't only dazzle; it also enlightens us. By our own power we can't hold on to Jesus or come to him; we can't dwell on the mountain; but through the Holy Spirit Jesus dwells in us and never lets us go, and enlightens us so that others might get a glimpse of that light, too, as it reflects and refracts from us.

Paul wrote the broken-and-healing church in Corinth that the light of the gospel is Jesus Christ, who is the image of God. "For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as slaves for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Jesus' face shines like a dazzling after-image in our hearts, and shines forth from us in our proclamation of word and deed for the bodies and souls, whole persons, we encounter.

We don't proclaim ourselves. We proclaim Jesus Christ. If we proclaim anything other than Christ – and that's the whole of Christ, including both the cost of discipleship, and the healing love, both the light on the mountain, and the cross we bear for him and the wounds he bears for us – if we proclaim anything other than Christ, then it's nothing more than advertising tricks that will leave people feeling disillusioned and thinking our message and our love and our service are quite simply too good to be true. If our programs and our priorities and our proclamation aren't in the end about Christ, then anyone we share the good news with will be disappointed when they find us to be nothing but shoe polish and spray-on deodorant and motor oil and cardboard.

All of us want something to hold on to; so give each other nothing but the one who holds on to us, who dwells with us, and who leads us down the mountain and always lights the way: Jesus the Christ, our Lord and Savior Alleluia and amen.

## HYMN OF THE DAY **"Dazzling Presence On The Mountain"**

*(To the Tune of "Come the Fount of Every Blessing")*

### **Verse 1**

Dazzling presence on the mountain:  
human eye had never seen  
such a wonder, such a resplendence  
heav'n and earth in cloud convene.  
"This is my Son, the beloved,"  
thund'rous voice from cloud exclaimed.  
Word made flesh to heal creation,  
to disciples God proclaimed.

### **Verse 2**

From this mount of mystic splendor  
to the cross Christ presses on;  
here no Moses nor Elijah,  
only thieves Christ's wings adorn.  
"Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy,"  
was one's penitential sigh.  
With transfiguring assurance,  
Christ rejoins his fervent cry.

### **Verse 3**

From the heights of new creation,  
Christ beholds his world, redeemed;  
as with Peter and companions,  
brings us now to sights unseen.  
Justice, mercy, and compassion:  
these the booths he bids us build,  
that the earth he loves may flourish  
as each life with grace is filled.

### **Verse 4**

Let our praise ring from each mountain,  
into deepest valleys pour,  
where, with lives of grateful service,  
we adore Christ evermore.  
To the Son, God's own beloved,  
and the Spirit endlessly,  
may the church's praise be lifted  
to the blessed Trinity.

## **CREED**

**We believe in one God,**

**the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,**

**the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation**

**he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;**

**he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,**

**who proceeds from the Father and the Son,\***

**who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS**

**A:** Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need. *[Brief silence]*

**A:** For the gospel proclaimed in word and deed, for communities of faith far and near, and for all who show the face of Christ throughout the world, let us pray.

**C:** *Have mercy, O God.*

A: For creation: sun, moon and stars; life forming in the dark earth and ocean deep; mountains, clouds and storms, and creatures seen and unseen, and for the Holy Spirit's guidance in our stewardship of God's creation, let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

A: For those responsible for safety and protection: for emergency responders and security guards, attorneys and advocates, civil servants and leaders of governments, that they witness to mercy and justice throughout the world, let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

A: For all who suffer this day (*especially*), that Christ our healer transform sickness into health, loneliness into companionship, bereavement into consolation, and suffering into peace, let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

A: For companions on life's journey in this worshiping community, for loved ones who cannot be with us this day, and for guidance during struggles we face, that God's glory is revealed around and among us, let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

A: In thanksgiving for the faithful departed who now rest from their earthly pilgrimage (*especially missionaries Cyril and Methodius*), that their lives of service and prayer inspire us in our living, let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

A: God, you are life. We pray for our world, our country, our community, and our church as we face the challenges of coronavirus. We pray for those who grieve the loss of loved ones, for the sick and their families, for those fearful of an unknown future. We pray for the millions of unemployed, for children and others at home - that they be safe from abuse. We pray for those who are alone and isolated during this time that they may feel your loving presence. We pray for all the hospital and health care workers, and all first responders, that they receive needed supplies and be kept protected in the work they do. We pray for those making decisions about how to live into the future and when that will happen. Keep us all in your care as we wait for a new day, let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

A: God of all families, you have given us families to be sanctuaries of blessing, comfort, and love for each other. Under your protection fill us with harmony, hope, and health. We pray this week for the McMillen and Morris families as well as our Messiah family. Guard all of our hearts that we may display love instead of hate, anger, or bitterness. Lead us all to be grateful for your abiding love and enable us to glorify you by sharing that love with others, let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

A: Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.

**C: Amen.**

### **\*THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**C: *Our Father, who art in heaven,***

***hallowed be thy name,***

***thy kingdom come,***

***thy will be done,***

***on earth as it is in heaven.***

***Give us this day our daily bread;***

***and forgive us our trespasses,***

***as we forgive those***

***who trespass against us;***

***and lead us not into temptation,***

***but deliver us from evil.***

***For thine is the kingdom,***

***and the power, and the glory,***

***forever and ever. Amen.***

### **BLESSING**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**C: Amen**

### **SENDING SONG Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises**

# Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises

## *Haleluya! Pelo tsa rona*

*Refrain— sung twice each time*



Ha - le - lu - ya! Pe - lo tsa ro - na, di tha -  
Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your prais - es, all our



bi - le ka - o - fe - la. Ha - le - lu - ya! Pe - lo tsa  
hearts are filled with glad - ness. Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your



ro - na, di tha - bi - le ka - o - fe - la.  
prais - es, all our hearts are filled with glad - ness.



1 Christ the Lord to us said: I am wine, I am bread,  
2 Now he sends us all out, strong in faith, free of doubt,

*Repeat stanza, then sing refrain*



I am wine, I am bread, give to all who thirst and hun - ger.  
strong in faith, free of doubt. Tell to all the joy - ful gos - pel.

Text: South African; tr. *Freedom Is Coming*, 1984  
Music: HALELUYA! PELO TSA RONA, South African  
Tr. © 1984 Utryck, admin. Walton Music Corp.

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# **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **PASTOR RYAN'S OFFICE HOURS**

Due to some shifting appointment scheduling, Pastor Ryan's office hours will be posted later this week. You can also reach Pastor Ryan via email at [messiahmechpr@gmail.com](mailto:messiahmechpr@gmail.com) or by phone at 507-360-7276 if you'd like to talk or set up an appointment.

## **WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE**

There is no weekly financial update due to the service being cancelled last Sunday on account of snow.

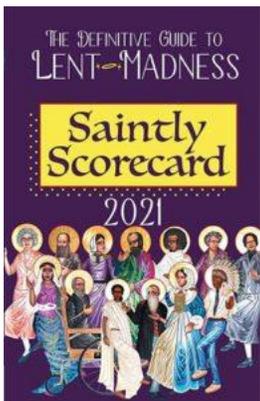
## **MCEF DONATION INFORMATION (CURRENT NEEDS)**

Hygiene items: Soap, Shampoo, Deodorant; Canned Meats: Spam & Vienna sausages; Soups, Beef Stew & Broth; Ketchup, Mustard & Mayo, Canned Tomatoes, Canned Spinach & Collards, Canned & boxed Potatoes, Pancake mix & Syrup, Crackers: graham, saltines & Ritz, Queen-sized sheets, Towels. Please, please, please...NO MORE clothing donations. We are completely full and totally out of storage space. Thank you for blessing us so richly!

## **ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP**

Please join us in the parking lot for an Ash Wednesday service, February 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM, as we embark on another Lenten passage. We will provide individually-wrapped kits of ashes for individuals and families to apply to themselves. We will also celebrate Communion. "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return," might feel different this year; but God is constant, and Jesus saves.

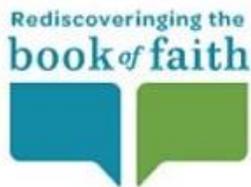
## **WHO WILL WIN THE GOLDEN HALO?**



Lenten Madness is back and getting ready for Lent 2021. In seeking a fun, engaging way for people to learn about the men and women comprising the Church's Calendar of Saints, this unique Lenten devotion is now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year! Fashioned after NCAA March Madness, the format is straightforward: 32 saints are placed into a tournament-like single elimination bracket. Each pairing remains open for a set period of time and people vote for their favorite saint. 16 saints make it to the Round of the Sainthood Sixteen; eight advance to the Round of the Elite Eight; four make it to the Faithful Four; two to the Championship; and the winner is awarded the coveted Golden Halo. Go to <https://www.lentmadness.org/about/> to learn

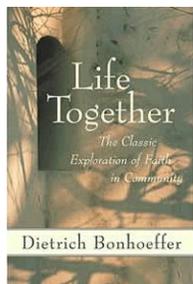
more about Lenten Madness and to fill out a bracket go to <https://www.lentmadness.org/bracket/>. Be creative and have some fun while learning about some amazing people!

## **"REDISCOVERING THE BOOK OF FAITH" - MIDWEEK MESSAGE MINI-SERIES**



You are all invited to a three-week series called "Rediscovering the Book of Faith," on the Wednesdays of February 3rd, 10th, and 17th at 10am. This series walks through the story of our Scriptures: how the present form of the Old Testament and New Testament came to be, and the impact the Reformation had on the Bible. We're going to try an experiment - we'll be offering this course over Zoom. The Zoom invite will be sent out prior to each session, and all are welcome. Invite your friends! A Zoom account is not required. Because of some copyrighted material such as videos, we can't post the videos of our class on the church website, but Pastor Ryan will provide a summary each week. Please contact Pastor Ryan if you have any questions.

## **LENTEN BOOK STUDY: LIFE TOGETHER (APART)**



You are invited to join in a Lenten book study on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book *Life Together*, Wednesdays at 10:00 am, beginning on February 24th. This book was written out of Bonhoeffer's experience leading an "underground" seminary for church leaders in Germany in the build-up to WWII. What does genuine Christian community look like? And for us today, what does community look like when we are separated in so many ways? You should be able to find this book through bookstores, libraries, online vendors, or through some form of digital download. Please read the Chapter 1 - "Community" - in preparation for our first session.

## **"SEVENTH DAY" RETREAT - MARCH 6<sup>TH</sup>**

Calling all 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> graders, registration for the annual faith formation retreat is now live. To register go to <https://www.vasynod.org/event/7th-day/>. The deadline to register is Tuesday, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>. The cost is just \$25. If you have any questions or if you need to register after the deadline, please contact Rev. Dave Delaney at [delaney@vasynod.org](mailto:delaney@vasynod.org), cell# 540-529-6893.

## **MAKE A RIPPLE**

Over the past several months, words of inspiration along with scripture passages, Messiah videos, and church announcements have been posted on our church Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/MessiahMech/> on a daily basis by me, Donna Shaw. Little did I realize, until I started sharing many of these posts with friends, that the encouraging words posted were not only welcomed but were needed. People responded with thankfulness and asked me to continue sharing during this strange time that we're in. It dawned on me that while I was evangelizing in a very small way, the ripples were going far and wide. Would you like to join me in making a ripple? All you have to do is share a post or video. You never know how far your ripple will go.

### **NOW ACCEPTING REPAIR PROGRAM APPLICATIONS!**

Thanks to a grant, Hanover Habitat for Humanity is able to serve low income senior citizens in the 23111 or 23116 Zip Code in the Hanover suburban service area, or 'Old Mechanicsville.' Repair work will be for health and safety issues or code violations. However due to COVID, we will only be able to do exterior repairs at this time. If you or a loved one is in need of a repair in this area, please visit their website at <https://www.hanoverhfh.org/programs/critical-repair-program/> for more information and an application. Repairs will be based on a first come, first serve basis while funding is available.

### **SMALL GROUPS**

If you'd like to have a small group or committee meeting at the church, please check out the Small Group Meetings and Cleaning Protocols. You can contact Davina when wanting to schedule a time for your group to meet and get the latest protocols. The only areas open at this time include the Fellowship Hall, the hallway to the restrooms, and the restrooms. All other parts of the building remain 'closed' for now. There are also copies of the forms at church on the kitchen counter for you to use at your meeting along with necessary cleaning supplies. Davina will maintain the completed forms in her office. Thanks for all you do! Stay well everyone!

### **UPDATED: REBUILD RVA GRANT PROGRAM**

On October 28, the Governor's Office released information about an expansion of the Rebuild Virginia Grants. The grants are available to small businesses and non-profits. Unlike the last time round of Rebuild Virginia grants, the expansion specifically says that an organization can receive funding even if the organization received CARES Act Funding. Qualified recipients can receive a grant of up to three months' worth of expenses to help with salaries, mortgage, utilities, etc. The FAQs aren't as entirely clear, but when you combine the FAQs with the application guide (pg 4 in particular addresses what is excluded for those with CARES Act funding), it appears that most organizations in Virginia are eligible. This funding may prove particularly helpful for child care and preschool ministries that had issues with part-time employees and PPP Loan calculations. One potential hurdle for an application is the requirement for a DUNS number. The DUNS numbers appear to be standard practice in the for-profit world and almost unheard of in the non-profit world. It is possible for a church or non-profit to apply for a DUNS number, but the online process to get the number can be confusing.

## **VIRGINIA RENT AND MORTGAGE RELIEF PROGRAM (RMRP)**

The Virginia Rent and Mortgage Relief Program (RMRP) is designed to support and ensure housing stability across the commonwealth during the coronavirus pandemic. Depending on availability of funds and household need, the RMRP may provide financial assistance for rent or mortgage payments for eligible households. This includes financial assistance for rent or mortgage payments past due beginning April 1, 2020 and onward. Financial assistance is a one-time payment with opportunity for renewal based on availability of funding and the household's need for additional assistance and continued eligibility. For more information please visit: Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD): [www.dhcd.virginia.gov/rmrp](http://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/rmrp).

## **SMILE! MESSIAH RECEIVES .5% DONATION WHEN YOU SHOP ON AMAZON!**

Even though the most recent holiday shopping season is behind us, the Stewardship team would like to remind everyone to sign up and use Amazon Smile! Signing up is easy and does not interfere with Prime Membership benefits. Amazon donates .5% of eligible purchases to the charitable organization of your choice.

Step 1: visit [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)

Step 2: sign in with your amazon account credentials

Step 3: Search for "Messiah Lutheran Church Mechanicsville"

Step 4: Start SHOPPING! \*please remember to bookmark [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) for easy access every time you shop. You must add the "smile" for this program.

Thank you all and happy shopping!

2020  
Reminded  
Us . . .



We may be scattered across the state,  
But wherever we are,  
We are Church Together!

With your congregation's help and support,  
we discovered new ways to be  
Faithful, Bold, and Serving in 2020.

Thank You!

