

*Messiah Lutheran Church
Mechanicsville, Virginia*



*February 28, 2021
Second Sunday in Lent*

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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

Second Sunday in Lent

(February 28, 2021)

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

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer.

C: Amen

P: God hears us when we cry, and draws us close in Jesus Christ. Let us return to the one who is full of compassion.

P: Fountain of living water,

C: *pour out your mercy over us. Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free. Rebuild what we have ruined and mend what we have torn. Wash us in your cleansing flood. Make us alive in the Spirit to follow in the way of Jesus, as healers and restorers of the world you so love. Amen.*

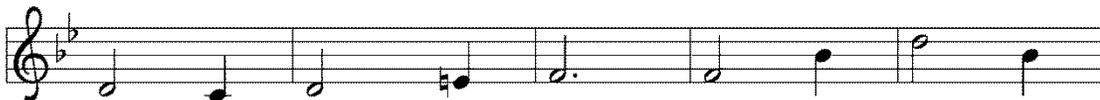
P: Beloved, God's word never fails. The promise rests on grace: by the saving love of Jesus Christ, the wisdom and power of God, your sins are † forgiven, and God remembers them no more. Journey in the way of Jesus.

C: Amen.

GATHERING SONG In the Cross of Christ I Glory



1 In the cross of Christ I glo - ry, tow'r - ing
2 When the woes of life o'er - take me, hopes de -
3 When the sun of bliss is beam - ing light and
4 Bane and bless - ing, pain and plea - sure, by the



o'er the wrecks of time. All the light of
ceive, and fears an - noy, nev - er shall the
love up - on my way, from the cross the
cross are sanc - ti - fied; peace is there that



sa - cred sto - ry gath - ers round its head sub - lime.
cross for - sake me; lo, it glows with peace and joy.
ra - diance stream - ing adds more lus - ter to the day.
knows no mea - sure, joys that through all time a - bide.

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: ***O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen***

FIRST LESSON Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Lector

A reading from Genesis.

As with Noah, God makes an everlasting covenant with Abraham and Sarah. God promises this old couple that they will be the ancestors of nations, though they have no child together. God will miraculously bring forth new life from Sarah's womb. The name changes emphasize the firmness of God's promise..

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

¹⁵God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

L: The word of the Lord.

C: ***Thanks be to God.***

SECOND LESSON: Romans 4:13-25

Lector

A reading from Romans.

Paul presents Abraham as the example for how a person comes into a right relationship with God not through works of the law but through faith. Though

Abraham and Sarah were far too old for bearing children, Abraham trusted that God would accomplish what God had promised to accomplish.

¹³The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void.

¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." ²³Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Mark 8:31-38

P: The Holy Gospel according to Mark.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

After Peter confesses his belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus tells his disciples for the first time what is to come. Peter's response indicates that he does not yet understand the way of the cross that Jesus will travel.

³¹[Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose

their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: *Praise to you, O Christ.*

SERMON

Pastor Ryan Radtke

Last week I shared a story with you about a trip I went on during my senior year of seminary, to the country of Turkey. This was actually the second trip I went on through seminary. (I mean, might as well get the most bang for the buck out of those student loans, right?) In our second year, we took a trip to the country of Namibia, just northwest of south Africa. Did you know that, outside of Europe, Namibia is the only country with a majority Lutheran population? The Lutheran churches in Namibia had longstanding ties with my seminary, Wartburg, so there was a trip pretty much every other year.

During our trip we met and talked with church leaders, and learned from one another. We talked to activist-pastors who had helped end Apartheid in Namibia. We talked with community leaders and clinics and bishops helping to combat the HIV/AIDS crisis. We stayed with host families for a time and worshiped in local congregations, where I was impressed as folks joyfully danced their offerings up to the altar. We were able to take a drive through Etosha National Park where we saw lions and giraffes and rhinos and more. There's a great story involving a goat I can share – another time. I have a different story to share today.

While we were in the capital city of Windhoek, we visited a pastor who had a two-point parish. First he gave us a tour of the church building in the city, and taught us about different varieties of Lutherans in the country. Then he took us to his second congregation. Out in the shantytown.

The shantytown was on the edge of the city, and thousands of people set up makeshift homes there, too poor to afford anything else, not that different from poor neighborhoods in any other big city in the world, or in our own country. The shantytown sprawled. And sprawled. Ramshackle houses made of cardboard and corrugated tin. There were some water pumps here and there, but mostly there was just poverty. And as we drove to his church, uncomfortable tourists looking out on acres and acres of shanties, we saw something that didn't fit in with the rest of the community – a huge brick building. A church.

Our host explained that this church was able to put up such a large building because they had been telling the poor and hungry folks that if they donated enough money, and if they prayed hard enough, and lived good lives, that God would take care of their problems. Their loved ones with AIDS

would be healed. They would be able to get more money and get out poverty. Things like that. And so people donated what they didn't have to begin with, and the church grew and grew. For a while.

It wasn't long, though, before folks realized that while the church was prospering, the promises it was pedaling were hollow. Token prayers and wishful thinking wouldn't change systemic issues like healthcare, education, and economics. Folks were still dying of AIDS. Of hunger. Lives were still broken.

Meanwhile, we arrived at our host's second congregation: a shanty-church. It had cardboard walls with bottle caps as washers to keep the nails from punching through. It had a tin roof. It had some donated pews. And...it was adding on. Because instead of empty promises, this church spoke the truth. It was honest about the problems, about the systems, about the sin, and about the suffering. It spoke of grace and forgiveness. It helped people with their needs but also was working to change the circumstances that led to those needs. And after some time, the folks from the brick church started to come to the shanty-church instead, along with many others, and they needed to double the size of their sanctuary.

Jesus never promises his disciples a problem-free life. Jesus never gets on TV, smiling and confident, to sell you his latest book that will solve all your problems and teach you how to live your best life now and tap into the prosperous life and earthly treasures that you deserve and God desires for you. Nope. Jesus enters into our suffering, takes on our sins, and dies on a cross to save us. He teaches us that the last will be first and the first will be last. To store up treasures in heaven. He tells us to take up our own cross and follow him. And where does following Jesus lead? To the poor. To the sick. To the untouchables. To giving away possessions, not heaping them up. Jesus' steps lead us to the washing of feet, to eating with sinners, to weeping when a friend dies. Jesus' steps lead to the shadow of the cross. Problem-free life? No. Christ-filled life? Yes.

Jesus starts to teach his disciples and the crowds that he will undergo suffering, and be rejected, and be killed, and only then rise again. And Peter, fresh off his gold-star confession that Jesus is the Messiah, tries to rebuke Jesus. "Keep it down, ok? You can't say things like that. Keep it positive!" And Jesus rebukes Peter, instead: "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things, but on human things."

Have you ever done that? Has someone started to talk about something worrying them, or something serious, or something troubling, and your response is to say, "Don't talk about stuff like that. I'm sure it will be ok. Just be positive!" When folks have a problem, is your first instinct to jump in and fix it? Or to listen and dwell in their sorrow with them? Do you tend to sugarcoat things that are difficult, or minimize them, or avoid them?

I'm not saying that you should be a Debbie Downer, or a Negative Neil. But I am saying that I hear it as good news that Jesus talked about these things openly, without shame. It means that we can, too. It's ok to talk about hard

things. It's ok to listen to someone else's problems without trying to immediately fix the problems or the person. I hear it as good news that Jesus is honest and truthful about what being a disciple actually entails. Deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow. Those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. We all have human things; we don't ignore them or downplay them; but by setting our mind on divine things, we can handle them. Honestly and openly.

Because after the difficulty comes the hope, and the promise. Not that all the problems will magically disappear through the proper amount of prayer or donations; but that Jesus is with us always, to the end of the age. That we are never alone. That God always leads his people from death to life, and not just in the someday of heaven, but also within the lives we live now. The Holy Spirit is ceaselessly working to bring life from death, hope from despair, purpose from suffering, reconciliation from sin, love from brokenness. Sometimes, though, you must undergo the death, the despair, the suffering, and the brokenness, before the life, the hope, the reconciliation, the love is the strongest, the most visible. Sometimes you sing God's praises from the shanty-church.

Today we heard about the faith of Abram-who-is-renamed-Abraham, both from Genesis and Romans. And Paul says that Abraham's faith is in the God who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. And sometimes that takes the shape of the miraculous, like Abraham and Sarah having a son well passed the childbearing years. Sometimes that takes the shape of covenants, that God will multiply our blessings so that we might be blessings in turn. Sometimes that takes the shape of faith that we could never generate on our own, to keep turning back to God, to keep resetting our minds our divine things, and not only human things.

God knows that we humans will always have problems and hardships and crises. They might be internal struggles. They might be poverty and hunger. They might be our driving impulses to keep everything under control; and to admit no weakness; and to always keep up appearances that we're doing ok; and to always fix every problem; and to always have bandaids at the ready even when the wounds we see around us are much deeper than the surface; and to cling to our bootstraps in endless attempts to pull ourselves up, when really God wants us to take up a cross instead.

Jesus spoke quite openly about the cost of discipleship, and the length God would go to to bring healing and forgiveness and grace to this world, and into our hearts. It is good news that we too can speak openly about our struggles and our problems and our worries, and listen openly to the struggles and problems and worries of others. You shouldn't always have to try to fix everything, to solve everything, to save everything. You can't, anyway. It is Jesus who saves us. It is Jesus who is open with us. And it is Jesus who opened his arms on the cross for us. Taking up a cross to follow him is not a burden; it is an openness to Christ's love, to the Spirit's guidance, and to God's grace. It is a removal of obstacles and impediments to that love and grace and guidance

changing your heart, and working good from evil in the world, and working through you for the sake of others. Taking up a cross means that we've placed our cares in God's hands, and our hands our full of cruciform love instead, ready to help our neighbors in their times of need.

The Christian life is not a problem-free life. But it is a Christ-filled life. God's love, and covenants, are eternal, and they are strong. May God's openness expand in us, so that we too need to add on and double the sanctuaries in our hearts. Thanks be to God. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less



1 My hope is built on noth - ing less than
 2 When dark - ness veils his love - ly face, I
 3 His oath, his cov - e - nant, his blood sus -
 4 When he shall come with trum - pet sound, oh,



Je - sus' blood and righ - teous - ness; no mer - it of my
 rest on his un - chang - ing grace; in ev - 'ry high and
 tain me in the rag - ing flood; when all sup - ports are
 may I then in him be found, clothed in his righ - teous -



own I claim, but whol - ly lean on Je - sus' name.
 storm - y gale my an - chor holds with - in the veil.
 washed a - way, he then is all my hope and stay.
 ness a - lone, re - deemed to stand be - fore the throne!

Refrain



On Christ, the sol - id rock, I stand; all oth - er ground is sink - ing sand.

Text: Edward Mote, 1797–1874, alt.
 Music: MELITA, John B. Dykes, 1823–1876

CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,**

**was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS

A: Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need. *[Brief silence]*

A: Your gift of grace is for all people. Give confident faith to all the baptized, that they may follow you wholeheartedly. Give new believers joy in your promises; give hope and courage to those who suffer for their faith. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: All the ends of the earth worship you. From galaxies to microorganisms, preserve your creation. Teach humanity to wonder at your works and to join you in tending to creation's well-being. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You rule over the nations. Raise up advocates for peace and justice within and between nations. Give life where hope seems dead; call into existence new realities we cannot even imagine.. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: In Jesus you joined humanity in suffering and death. Reveal to all the depth of your love shown on the cross. Accompany all who suffer in body, mind, and spirit. Restore all who are sick or grieving. Bring vindication for victims of injustice, exploitation, and oppression (especially). Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You made Abraham and Sarah the ancestors of a multitude of nations. Bless grandparents, parents, and foster parents, and the children who look to them for care and guidance. Console those who deal with infertility, parents who have entrusted their children to adoption, and children longing to be adopted. Equip ministries and services to families. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: We await the day of Christ's coming in glory. Lead us by the example of all the saints whom you have called to take up their cross and follow you, that

together we may find our lives in you. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

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. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

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 Porter and Radtke 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. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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,

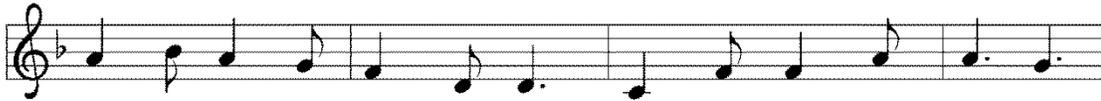
forever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING

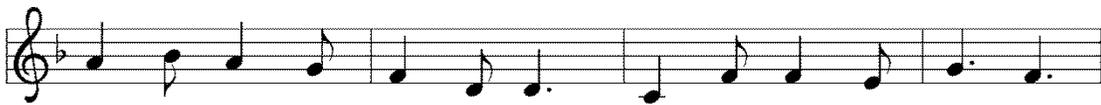
P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

C: **Amen**

SENDING SONG Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross

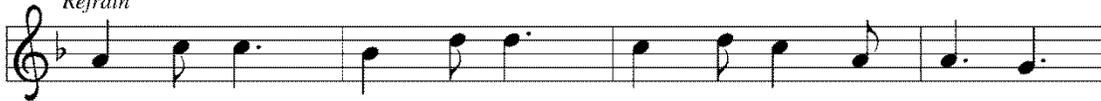


1 Je - sus, keep me near the cross, there's a pre - cious foun - tain;
2 Near the cross, a trem - bling soul, love and mer - cy found me;
3 Near the cross! O Lamb of God, bring its scenes be - fore me;
4 Near the cross I'll watch and wait, hop - ing, trust - ing ev - er,



free to all, a heal - ing stream flows from Cal - v'ry's moun - tain.
there the bright and morn - ing star sheds its beams a - round me.
help me walk from day to day with its shad - ow o'er me.
till I reach the gold - en strand just be - yond the riv - er.

Refrain



In the cross, in the cross be my glo - ry ev - er;



till my ran - somed soul shall find rest be - yond the riv - er.

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915

Music: NEAR THE CROSS, William H. Doane, 1832–1915

Announcements

PASTOR RYAN'S OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Ryan hopes to get back to regular office hours asap. Meanwhile, you can reach Pastor Ryan via email at messiahmechpr@gmail.com or by phone at 507-360-7276 if you'd like to talk or set up an appointment.

WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

Here is this week's information based on our 2021 budget.

- Contributions to general fund averaged \$2,673.39 (down from \$2,847.45 through February 21, 2021.)
- We are \$6,549.87 behind the year-to-date budget needs (increasing from \$4,013.87 the last time reported).
- Weekly budget need is \$3,492.13

MCEF DONATION INFORMATION (CURRENT NEEDS)

Spring is just around the corner and the clothing closets will be getting ready. Winter clothing will not be accepted until in the fall but spring and summer clothing is now being accepted. There is a need for women's 2X and 3X clothing. New underwear is always a need for ladies and boys, all sizes; and men's jeans in small to medium sizes. Double and King sized sheets are needed in the linen closet. Food needs include canned spinach, jelly, instant oatmeal packets, pancake mix and syrup.

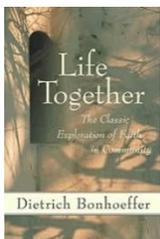
The "Fun Raiser" at Chicken Salad Chick continues on the 3rd Monday of each month, mention that you support MCEF and 10% of the sale is donated to MCEF. Thank you for your support of your of your neighbors in need through MCEF.

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 11th 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 Saintly Sixteen; eight advance to the Round of the Elate 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!

LENTEN BOOK STUDY: LIFE TOGETHER (APART)



You are invited to join in a Lenten book study on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book *Life Together*, beginning on February 24th. The first session was a recorded presentation by Pastor Ryan. The next Zoom sessions will be Wednesday, March 3 at 1:00 pm. The Zoom link will be sent by email at a later date. 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.

CALMED WATERS, STILLED STORMS: WHEN JESUS MEETS CHAOS

Since we can't get together with our friends from All Souls this Lent for worship and soup suppers, Pastor Ryan and Rev. Katherine reached out to some of our neighboring churches to work together. We are happy to present you with a Lenten series that will feature five ministers from our neighborhood called "Calmed Waters, Stilled Storms: When Jesus Meets Chaos." Each week one of us will share a brief message based on Jesus stilling storms and walking on water, while we are still hanging out in our "boats" during this pandemic. And, as a bonus, each week we'll share a soup recipe from one of the churches! Check out this link for our first installment from Pastor Matt Messenger at Mechanicsville Presbyterean Church: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuvfwCfUzng>. And, if you have a soup recipe you'd like to share, please email it to Pastor Ryan.

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.

LENTEN OFFERINGS

Many of our ministry partners have felt the effects of the Covid restrictions this past year. One who has felt it in particular are the good folks at Caroline Furnace Lutheran Camp and Retreat Center. We encourage you to give a special Lenten offering this year to Caroline Furnace. Just mark on your check, envelope, or electronic donation to Messiah that it's for the camp, and we'll send the collective offerings at the end of Lent. We pray that they'll be able to have a full load of campers soon, and we thank God for the amazing things that happen at camp!

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.

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

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 for easy access every time you shop. You must add the "smile" for this program. Thank you all and happy shopping!



Messiah Lutheran Church

8154 Atlee Road
Mechanicsville, Virginia 23111
(804)746-7134

**web page: www.MessiahMech.com
e-mail: MessiahMech@gmail.com**

The Rev. Ryan Radtke, Pastor

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Messiah's Mission Statement:

"To share the good news of Jesus Christ and to invite all to join us in faith, worship, and service."