

*Messiah Lutheran Church
Mechanicsville, Virginia*



October 3, 2021

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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

The service will be livestreamed at 10:45 am on Messiah's FB page, and that video will be available later on the church website and YouTube. There is no pre-recording of the service on YouTube this week.

Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/MessiahMech/>

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

8154 Atlee Road, Mechanicsville, VA 23111

Pastor: The Rev. Ryan Radtke

Church: (804) 746-7134; Email: MessiahMech@gmail.com; Website: MessiahMech.com

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

October 3, 2021

**Congregation standing*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome visitors! May the Spirit of Christ fill your heart as we worship today. You are invited to make Messiah your church home.

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose teaching is life, whose presence is sure, and whose love is endless.

C: Amen

P: Let us confess our sins to the one who welcomes us with an open heart.

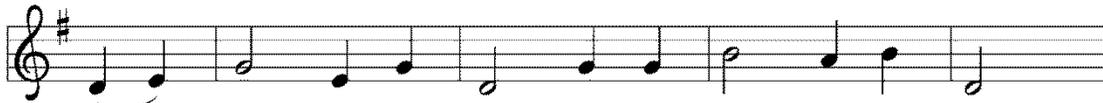
P: God, our comforter,

C: *like lost sheep, we have gone astray. We gaze upon abundance and see scarcity. We turn our faces away from injustice and oppression. We exploit the earth with our apathy and greed. Free us from our sin, gracious God. Listen when we call out to you for help. Lead us by your love to love our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.*

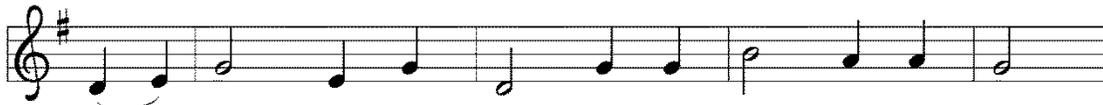
P: All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. By the gift of grace in ☩ Christ Jesus, God makes you righteous. Receive with glad hearts the forgiveness of all your sins.

C: Amen.

*GATHERING SONG How Firm a Foundation



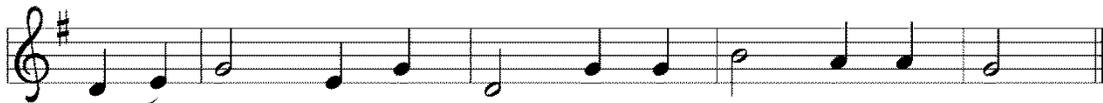
1 How firm a foun - da - tion, O saints of the Lord,
2 "Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dis - mayed,
3 "When through fi - 'ry tri - als your path - way shall lie,
4 "Through - out all their life - time my peo - ple shall prove



is laid for your faith in Christ Je - sus, the Word!
for I am your God and will still give you aid;
my grace, all - suf - fi - cient, shall be your sup - ply.
my sov - 'reign, e - ter - nal, un - change - a - ble love;



What more can he say than to you he has said
I'll strength - en you, help you, and cause you to stand,
The flames shall not hurt you; I on - ly de - sign
and then, when gray hairs shall their tem - ples a - dorn,



who un - to the Sav - ior for ref - uge have fled?
up - held by my righ - teous, om - nip - o - tent hand."
your dross to con - sume and your gold to re - fine."
like lambs they shall still in my bo - som be borne."

Text: J. Rippon, *A Selection of Hymns*, 1787, alt.
Music: FOUNDATION, Early American

*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: ***Sovereign God, you have created us to live in loving community with one another. Form us for life that is faithful and steadfast, and teach us to trust like little children, that we may reflect the image of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.***

FIRST LESSON: Genesis 2:18-24

Lector

A reading from Genesis.

Genesis 2 stresses that people are not meant to live in isolation but in relationship. Out of love for humanity, God creates them male and female, to provide companionship for each other and to become with each other "one flesh." The Hebrew words used here are ish (man) and ishshah (woman)

¹⁸The LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." ¹⁹So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. ²¹So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²²And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken." ²⁴Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND LESSON: Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12

Lector

A reading from Hebrews.

Quoting from the psalms, this passage from Hebrews emphasizes that Jesus, the one through whom God created everything and who sits at God's right hand, is also the one who experienced human suffering and death in order to blaze the path of salvation for us.

¹Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. ³He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

^{2:5}Now God did not subject the coming world, about which we are speaking, to angels. ⁶But someone has testified somewhere,

"What are human beings that you are mindful of them,
or mortals, that you care for them?"

⁷You have made them for a little while lower than the angels;
you have crowned them with glory and honor,

⁸subjecting all things under their feet."

Now in subjecting all things to them, God left nothing outside their control. As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them,⁹but we do see Jesus, who

for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

¹⁰It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ¹¹For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, ¹²saying,

“I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters,
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.”.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL: Mark 10:2-16**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Mark.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus announced and enacted in history the new reality of God's surprising activity. These two stories demonstrate this new reality: Women and children are accepted and valued, not dismissed as inferior to adult men.

²Some Pharisees came, and to test [Jesus] they asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” ³He answered them, “What did Moses command you?” ⁴They said, “Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her.” ⁵But Jesus said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. ⁶But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ⁷‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, ⁸and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

¹⁰Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. ¹¹He said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; ¹²and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”

¹³People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. ¹⁴But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. ¹⁵Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.” ¹⁶And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

Pastor Ryan Radtke

Have you ever heard of the “honeymoon phase”? It's the term used to describe the first period of time in a new relationship – usually a marriage – during which both people always get along, no matter what. You're still learning about each other, everything seems new, you find a way to agree on everything, you find no faults with each other. Everything is giddy and great, and you can't seem to stop smiling. It's usually about new couples, but it can also apply to a person in a new job, or the first few months with a new piece of furniture (and even though that one might be little one-sided, it's real and does exist.).

Liz and I had a honeymoon phase when we got married, but ours was a little different than the “normal” honeymoon phase. We got married in the middle of a semester of seminary, and we had to jump right back into classes and homework two days after our wedding. But even with all of that, we were very moon-eyed in that first stretch of time, moving in together, traveling together, the whole nine yards. It still makes me smile to think about it.

Some people say that the honeymoon phase is all rose-colored glasses and being naive, but I think it's just people being happy. It usually doesn't last forever. In time, some of that newness wears off. You might see some flaws or have some problems - Encounter some conflicts. Sometimes life cuts your honeymoon phase short. The end of the honeymoon phase is not a bad thing; because some other kinds of “good things” are just beginning. The love and happiness that you have for each other get deeper, and you begin a marathon pace – the long haul. All relationships require work and attention and care; and the end of the honeymoon phase is where that rubber starts to hit the road.

But there are also times when the lifting of the honeymoon phase reveals some bigger issues than you realized were there. More serious conflicts. Some things that are hard to un-see. Sometimes, whether it's a new job or a new relationship, you can't work it out. You can't reconcile the differences, and so the relationship comes to an end. There is a parting of ways.

And that's where we join Jesus in today's Gospel lesson, talking with some Pharisees about divorce. It seems like he's taking a pretty hard line against divorce at first, and lots of churches and pastors over the years have used this passage to back up their own hard lines against divorce. I've got to say, today's is not a favorite lesson to preach on. First of all, marriage and divorce were very different in Jesus' time and culture, and so it's jarring to reconcile

then and now, there and here. On top of that, I've known a lot of people who have gotten divorced – a sister, cousins, close friends and classmates. Liz's parents got divorced after 24 years of marriage, and it definitely had an impact on her and her sister.

For some couples, divorce was the best possible solution. There can even be a legitimate honeymoon phase to enjoy *not* being together, after the marriage has ended. Is divorce unfortunate? Sometimes. Painful and damaging? Sometimes. But is it really as bad as Jesus makes it out to be in our lesson today? For Jesus to say that getting divorced and then remarriage is a form of *adultery* of all things – that hits my ears in a harsh way today. Most people know someone who is remarried. Show of hands – how many of you know someone who has gotten divorced and remarried? Are they adulterers? That's a line in the sand that really troubles me.

On the surface, this is a passage about marriage and divorce, and the rules that apply to them. But below the surface, the Pharisees don't really care about marriage that much in this particular conversation; they're just trying to trap Jesus and knock him down a peg or two. Divorce was just their weaponized rule of choice today. So Jesus decides to turn the tables and teach the Pharisees a lesson instead. First, he says that the rules Moses handed out were only because of the hardness of heart of people like the Pharisees. Then, Jesus brings them back to *before* Moses, to the book of Genesis and the story of Adam and Eve at Creation. The original honeymoon phase.

There was an issue of *Currents in Theology* where Bradley Schmeling, a pastor in Minnesota, talked about the part of the Creation story where Adam names all the creatures. Adam and these creatures will be in the garden together, but Adam hasn't found his true partner yet. The different animals come before Adam and none of them can fill that role of partner/co-worker/co-steward. The culmination of the story then comes with the creation of Eve, who is, finally, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. They are alike - on equal footing with each other. They are humans - true partners with each other. They will be in relationship with each other - co-stewards with each other.

Pastor Schmeling then shared some advice he received from a friend about finding a spouse: "If they make you grow into your higher and better self, then they are that one." We all yearn to live our lives in a community that is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. We long to be fully human. We still experience being fully human when we are in relationship with others that brings out the best in ourselves.

However, being in a fully human relationship also makes us vulnerable. Pastor Schmeling said that his friend forgot to mention that finding that spouse could also bring out the very worst things about yourself: all your insecurities, all the skeletons in your closet, the things you like least about yourself. Relationships that once held promise can become broken, and so sometimes marriage can end in divorce. That relationship breaks, that co-partnering breaks, that friendship breaks - and we then see how communities and families get torn apart by divisions.

When Jesus responds to the Pharisees' trap, he is saying: of course, human beings were made for relationship. Remember the Creation story? That was kind of like the original blueprint: two people made for each other, partners. When relationships break down, though, people are vulnerable. People get hurt. When Jesus talks about divorce here, he's really talking about the people who are the most vulnerable, who are the most hurt.

The Pharisees talk about when a man divorces his wife. But Jesus talks about men *and* women. Jesus builds on the original law to include all of humanity. He takes the Pharisees' trap and springs it back on them. The whole adultery thing is about a person getting divorced and then getting remarried; but the other person from the original marriage is now without that partnership. What Jesus says shines a spotlight on the fact that, in that time and place, the one who got left in the marriage is potentially the most vulnerable, the most hurt.

And the very next thing that happens, right after Jesus says this about divorce, is that Jesus welcomes the children. As we talked about a couple of weeks ago, in the society of Jesus' time, children were easily some of the most vulnerable people. They weren't valued in the same way that children are today. They didn't have rights. They didn't have a say in their future. They were often seen as a necessary nuisance until they were old enough to start working and contributing. They couldn't defend themselves. They were the expendables of society. And Jesus says that *children*, of all people, are the ones who the kingdom of God belongs to. "Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it."

In the kingdom of God, the experience of the most vulnerable shapes the choices we make for the future. The "least" have to be considered first when it comes to justice and rules and laws. We protect the vulnerable in any relationship, because to be truly human is to be in equal, life-giving relationships. And when you get right down to it, Jesus says, the original blueprint for this life-giving relationship is where there is a sense of partnership and completeness in one another, flesh of our flesh, bone of our bones: when we are equals and partners. And, even more, that it's that kind of relationship

that is to be the standard for ALL human interactions and relationships, whether they be in the deepest covenantal bonds of marriage or in a casual encounter with another human being - this is the standard in the Kingdom of God. And the more vulnerable a person is – like a child – the more you work to maintain that standard.

This Kingdom of God ideal – whether it plays out in marriage or divorce or anything else, whether you are a child or an adult – the Kingdom of God ideal is that you see the humanity in others and work for everyone to find real relationships, to be on equal footing, to treat one another as flesh of flesh and bone of bone. In the Kingdom of God, we who follow Christ seek out the vulnerable and the least and become like them. We try to see things from their perspective. We try to see the vulnerable and the least from God's perspective. We try to either bring them up and level the playing field, or humble ourselves down, or both.

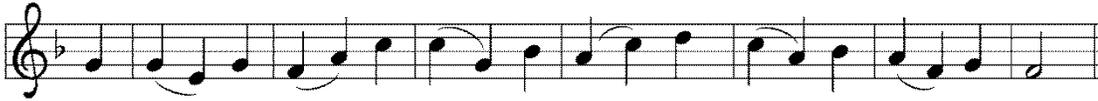
What starts as a legal duel, an exchange between Jesus and the Pharisees about divorce, is really about something much bigger. It's about Jesus shining a spotlight on the original blueprint of human relationships, the original honeymoon phase of humanity, in the best sense of the phrase. Jesus spells out what God's love looks like in the Kingdom of God, both in his reply to the Pharisees and by his welcoming of the children. Jesus calls on us to change our perspective and help enact that Kingdom of God ideal.

Our reading from Hebrews says, "It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Jesus becomes vulnerable, Jesus becomes least, Jesus suffers - on the cross. Jesus enters our messy world of children and divorce and insecurities and hurts and broken relationships and everything else. Jesus, who was superior to the angels, sits with us in our suffering. He welcomed the children, the most vulnerable, into his arms, and blessed them, and called them good. Jesus teaches us to level the playing field, and to work to restore all of our relationships to be as fresh and new as it was at the very beginning. God looks at us human beings and sees us clearly, no rose-colored glasses, and says, "What God has joined together – through Christ – let no one separate. Thanks be to God.

*HYMN OF THE DAY Blest Be the Tie That Binds



1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Chris-tian love;
2 Be - fore our Fa - ther's throne we pour our ar - dent prayers;
3 We share our mu - tual woes, our mu - tual bur - dens bear,
4 From sor - row, toil, and pain, and sin we shall be free;



the u - ni - ty of heart and mind is like to that a - bove.
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our com - forts and our cares.
and of - ten for each oth - er flows the sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.
and per - fect love and friend - ship reign through all e - ter - ni - ty.

Text: John Fawcett, 1740–1817, alt.

Music: DENNIS, Johann G. Nägeli, 1773–1836, adapt.

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: Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need. *[Brief silence]*

A: Holy One, you have raised up faithful leaders throughout history. Empower those discerning a call to ministry and all seminarians, especially Vicar Ginny Banister at Christ the King Lutheran Church, that they continue to be formed

for the sake of the gospel. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: You have established a diverse and beautiful creation. Revive declining species and preserve endangered lands. Cultivate in us a sense of wonder for the world you created. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: You desire for us not to be alone and to live in community with one another. Strengthen relationships between nations and peoples, that we celebrate and support one human family. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: You share in our experiences and struggles. Bless all who live with any mental or physical disability. Inspire creative communities, spaces, and environments that are accessible and hospitable. And for all others who are in need this day, we pray – especially... Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: You have established and nurtured relationships that extend beyond those gathered here today. Bless members who can no longer travel to worship with us and remind us of their continued role in this community of faith. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: You promise eternal life to all your children. Thank you for the people of faith who have gone before us. Strengthen our trust we have in you. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: Heavenly Father, You have generously blessed us with families. Thank you for your guidance and protection. As you love and care for us, may we also always love and care for our families and keep them in our prayers. We pray this week for the Absher, Addair and Albertson families as well as our Messiah family. May You keep us all from danger and sickness and guard our hearts so that we are reminded of Your Grace. Lord, in your mercy.

C: hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

PEACE-IN-PLACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

***Please share signs of peace with those in your immediate vicinity only. If any are not comfortable making physical contact during the peace, please share peace in other ways.*

THE GIVING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

***Offering baskets are located near the doors to the sanctuary. Please place your offerings in the baskets at the end of the service as you depart.*

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

C: *God of abundance, you cause streams to break forth in the desert and manna to rain from the heavens. Accept the gifts you have first given us. Unite them with the offering of our lives to nourish the world you love so dearly; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen*

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And also with you.*

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: *We lift them to the Lord.*

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: *It is right to give God thanks and praise.*

***PREFACE**

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**C: *Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.***

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P: Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await

his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

C: Amen.

***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.***

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P: Taste and see that the Lord is good.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

COMMUNION

P: Taste and see that the Lord is good.

C: Amen

***Please process up the center aisle as directed by the ushers. Please maintain social distancing between family groups while processing. Bread and wine will be available from the pastor and the first lay assistant, with empty cups available on your way to the front. Prepackaged grape juice and wafer servings will be available from the second lay assistant. Baskets for empty cups will be set out. Please return to your seats down the side aisles.*

***POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

P: May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ that you have received strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: Let us pray.

Lord of life, in the gift of your body and blood you turn the crumbs of our faith into a feast of salvation. Send us forth into the world with shouts of joy, bearing witness to the abundance of your love in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: **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 \mp give you peace.

C: **Amen**

*SENDING SONG

Jesus Loves Me!

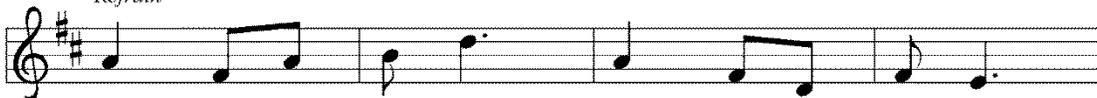


1 Je - sus loves me! this I know, for the Bi - ble tells me so;
2 Je - sus loves me! he who died heav - en's gates to o - pen wide;
3 Je - sus loves me! he will stay close be - side me all the way;



lit - tle ones to him be - long, they are weak, but he is strong.
he will wash a - way my sin, let his lit - tle child come in.
when at last I come to die, he will take me home on high.

Refrain



Yes, Je - sus loves me, yes, Je - sus loves me,



yes, Je - sus loves me, the Bi - ble tells me so.

Text: Anna B. Warner, 1820-1915, alt.

Music: JESUS LOVES ME, William B. Bradbury, 1816-1868

*DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

***Please exit through either set of doors, maintaining distance between family groups. You are welcome to enjoy fellowship time outside in the parking lot.*

POSTLUDE

(Text used by permission of Augsburg Fortress license #11886-S)

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS – SUNDAY, October 3, 2021

Pianist: Debbie Walker
Lay Assistants: (1st Lay Asst.) Lois Schroeder (2nd Lay Asst.) Donna Combs
Lectors: Donna Combs
Acolyte: Ella Anderson
Greeters: Gladys Hubert
Ushers: Roger Schroeder & Daren Williams
Altar Guild: Becky Collie
Counters: Gordon & Marilyn Gunn

Announcements

PASTOR RYAN'S OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Ryan will be off October 4-10. Pastor Jim Berg will preside at worship on the 10th – thanks, Pastor Jim! In case of an emergency, please contact Rev. Katherine Dougherty at her cell number, 434-989-5067.

WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

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

- Contributions to the general fund averaged \$2,898.95 (down from \$2,949.00 through September 26, 2021).
- We are \$42,589.88 behind the year-to-date budget needs (increasing from \$39,595.88 the last time reported).
- Weekly budget need is \$3,991.00.

OUR NEIGHBOR'S FAITH

We're continuing our discussions of various faith traditions and denominations this week by talking about some folks who are near and dear to us – Episcopalians!

IN REMEMBRANCE

We learned this past week that Pat Motley, former member and choir director of Messiah, passed away from a heart related illness in Florida where she had lived with her son for the past 2 ½ years. Pat was a delightful lady who loved music and had the voice to show that love. A graveside service will take place at Thornrose Cemetery in Staunton, VA on October 23, 2021 at 1:00pm. There will be an obituary placed in the Richmond paper the week of the service. The family has asked that donations be given to Messiah Lutheran Church in her memory. Please keep Pat's family in your prayers

HELP URGENTLY NEEDED!

We now have 3 full time greeters as well as 1 who can serve only 10 months a year. Two of our summer greeters have gone back to their Sunday-School classes, so in order to have a "reasonable rotation" rather than once every 3 Sundays for 2021, except for October & December, we'll have greeters serving once every 4 Sundays. If you could help us out, we would be very grateful; even if you'd just like to serve in the rotation (1 in 4 Sundays for October and/or December) that would be a great help. Please send your reply to sallybennett3317@gmail.com, and I'll write back to you to let you know what you will need to do when you are a MLC greeter. Blessings to you and yours, Sally Bennett, Worship Team Chair

CHURCH DIRECTORIES

Updated church directories are available for pick up in the narthex.

PRAYER LIST RESET

As we begin our fourth quarter, the current prayer list has been reset. Please contact Davina with names that need to remain on the list. Email her at MessiahMech@gmail.com or phone 746-7134 with your requests.

ALTAR FLOWERS

If you would like to sign up for altar flowers, please follow the procedures below. Pick an empty date on the chart and write your name. Pick an empty date on the chart and write your name. Please make your check for \$46 payable to "Messiah Lutheran Church" with the word "Flowers" on the outside of the Envelope, and place it in the offering plate. If you would rather make a general donation for altar flowers to help ensure that we have fresh flowers on the altar weekly (except for Lent), as needed for vacant Sundays, follow the directions above, but instead write "line-item altar flowers" on the Memo line on your check and on the outside of the Envelope.

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!

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE: HURRICANES AND WILDFIRES

Please visit [ELCA.org/disaster](https://www.elca.org/disaster) for information on how to help those affected by these natural disasters and the long period of recovery ahead.