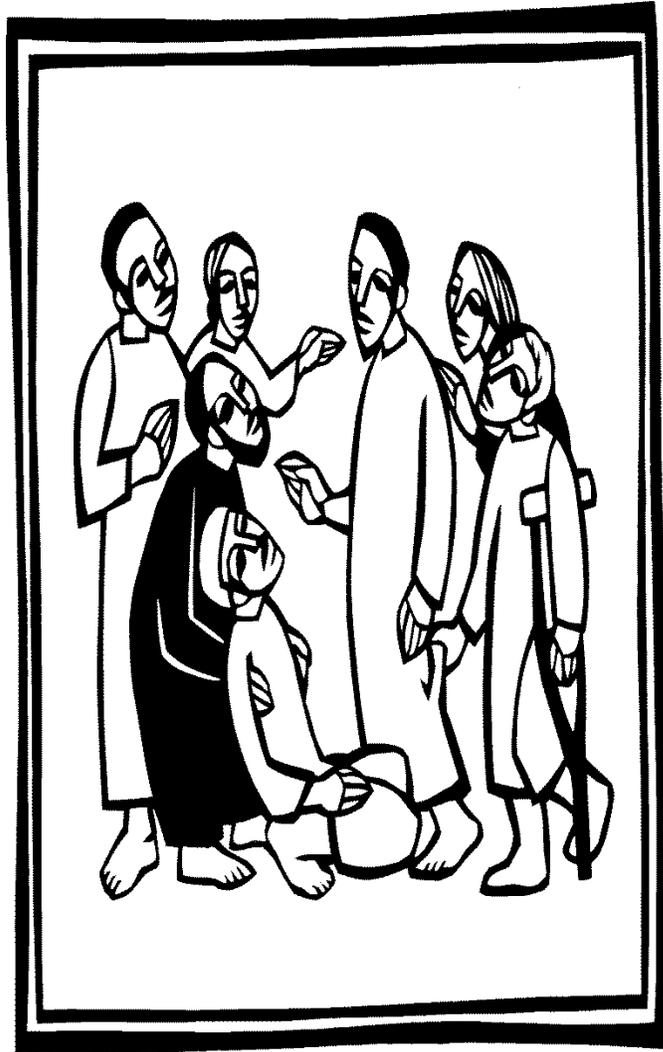


*Messiah Lutheran Church
Mechanicsville, Virginia*



*February 13, 2022
The Sixth Sunday after Epiphany*

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

THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

FEBRUARY 13, 2022

**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, who creates us, redeems us, and calls us by name.

C: Amen

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

P: Most merciful God,

C: *we confess that we have sinned against you and your beloved children. We have turned our faces away from your glory when it did not appear as we expected. We have rejected your word when it made us confront ourselves. We have failed to show hospitality to those you called us to welcome. Accept our repentance for the things we have done and the things we have left undone. For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us and lead us, that we may bathe in the glory of your Son born among us, and reflect your love for all creation. Amen.*

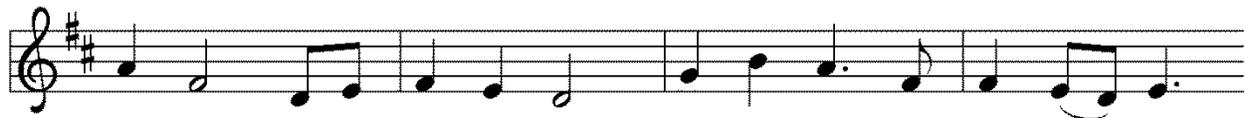
P: Rejoice in this good news: In ☩ Christ Jesus, your sins are forgiven. You are descendants of the Most High, adopted into the household of Christ, and inheritors of eternal life. Live as freed and forgiven children of God.

C: Amen.

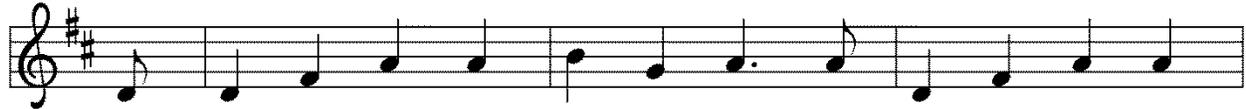
*** GATHERING SONG *We Come to the Hungry Feast***

(ELW 479)

We Come to the Hungry Feast



1 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a word of peace.
2 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a world re - leased
3 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry that the hun - ger cease,



To hun - gry hearts un - sat - is - fied the love of God is
from hun - gry folk of ev - 'ry kind, the poor in bod - y,
and know - ing, though we eat our fill, the hun - ger will stay



not de - nied. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
poor in mind. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
with us; still we come, we come to the hun - gry feast.

Text: Ray Makeever, b. 1943
Music: HUNGRY FEAST, Ray Makeever
Text and music © 1982 Ray Makeever, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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*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 together:

C: ***Living God, in Christ you make all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen***

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 17:5-10

Lector

A reading from Jeremiah.

These verses compose a poem that is part of a larger collection of wisdom sayings that contrast two ways of life. Life with God brings blessing; the power and vitality of God is active in our life. Life without God brings a curse, the power of death.

⁵Thus says the LORD:

Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals
and make mere flesh their strength,
whose hearts turn away from the LORD.

⁶They shall be like a shrub in the desert,
and shall not see when relief comes.

They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness,
in an uninhabited salt land.

⁷Blessed are those who trust in the LORD,
whose trust is the LORD.

⁸They shall be like a tree planted by water,
sending out its roots by the stream.

It shall not fear when heat comes,
and its leaves shall stay green;
in the year of drought it is not anxious,
and it does not cease to bear fruit.

⁹The heart is devious above all else;
it is perverse—
who can understand it?

¹⁰Let the LORD test the mind
and search the heart,
to give to all according to their ways,
according to the fruit of their doings.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND LESSON: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Lector

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

For Paul, the resurrection of Christ is the basis for Christian hope. Because Christ has been raised, those who are in Christ know that they too will be raised to a new life beyond death.

¹²Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; ¹⁴and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain. ¹⁵We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. ¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. ¹⁷If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ¹⁸Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. ¹⁹If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

²⁰But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL: Luke 6:17-26**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

After choosing his twelve apostles, Jesus teaches a crowd of followers about the nature and demands of discipleship. He begins his great sermon with surprising statements about who is truly blessed in the eyes of God.

¹⁷[Jesus] came down with [the twelve] and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. ¹⁸They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. ¹⁹And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

²⁰Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹“Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be filled.

“Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

²²“Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. ²³Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

²⁴“But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.

²⁵“Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.

“Woe to you who are laughing now,
for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶“Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

Pastor Ryan Radtke

I lived on the Central Coast of California for seven and a half years. For around half of those years we lived in a house in one of those neighborhood developments full of cozy cul-de-sacs and streets named after trees and birds

and the like. For all but about three months of those years we were living in a drought, with varying degrees of watering restrictions.

In the front yard of that house was a tree. It was a nice tree. Pretty to look at, provided some much-needed shade. But after a while we began to suspect that this tree wasn't right for our hot and dry interior valley neighborhood in the drought years and the watering restrictions. All of this tree's roots were right at ground level – most of them, in fact, were visible through the grass. It made mowing the front yard a real pain. It also wasn't very healthy for the tree.

The tree simply didn't have deep roots. We weren't sure if this was just the nature of that type of tree, or if it just never got a chance to go deep before the dry years kicked in, but either way: the roots stayed at the surface, because that's where the easy water from the sprinklers could be found. The water never got to soak deep down, so the roots stayed where the water was. The roots never had to probe deeper, because the water was right there, and the groundwater was too far away. It was just a matter of time before this tree would be in real trouble. It would have been very easy for it to meet the fate that a lot of other trees in the area did: a big storm would come through, and the tree would simply tip over, roots and all.

Trees need water. They need reliable water. Deep water, so that their roots dig deep, too, and anchor the trees and everything around them. If you've ever driven through the plains or the prairie, you'll see these lines of trees here and there. That's a sure sign of water – a creek, a river, something – because trees need water. And water means life. It means survival.

Our reading from Jeremiah today sets a tone. It sets up a very straightforward contrast: there are those who delight in the law of the LORD; and there are those who don't. There are those who trust in the LORD (they are blessed); and there are those who trust in mere mortals and mere flesh (they are cursed). It's a very simple, back-and-white, either or. Either you delight in the law of the LORD; or you don't. Either you trusted in the LORD, or you didn't. The law was a gift to the people for a good life, and the LORD gave the gift. Those who delight in the law and trust in the LORD are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season and whose leaves stay green and never wither, even when the heat comes. They continue to produce fruit even when things get harsh. Those who don't delight in the law are like chaff blown away by the wind. They have nothing to water their roots, so they cannot stand. The way of the wicked perishes. Those who don't trust in the LORD are cursed. They are like shriveled shrubs in parched places, and never see relief when it comes. They suffer when things get harsh.

It's a simple contrast, a straightforward either-or. Are you a tree planted by the water, yielding fruit? Or not? Do you love God's way of life? Or not? That was the message to Israel. So how about us? Does anyone feel like you're withered and perishing? Or do you feel like you're fed by the water and producing fruit? And if you feel one way or the other, do we fall in the same categories as the Israelites? These passages seem to be asking, "Where are you planted today? How are your roots?"

Today we heard the opening lines of what is often called the "Sermon on the Plain." It has some similarities to the Gospel of Matthew's Sermon on the Mount, but Luke shares Jesus' teachings in a different way. One main difference is that Luke makes sure that we know that Jesus has been healing people of their diseases and curing them of their unclean spirits. People are clamoring just to touch him so that power might come out from him and they might be truly healed. It's almost like that poor, water-starved tree in our front yard: desperate for what it needs to live and survive, reaching out for anything that might give it life.

And so, after all of these healings – both the ones Jesus gives and the ones people go after – Jesus begins to teach. And his teaching, his words, are the deeper water. His teaching is the river, the stream in the wilderness or the prairie, the life-giving water that anchors all the trees' roots and ensures that they will stay green and bear fruit even in the most extreme spans of drought.

Jesus brings back a variation on the contrast we heard in Jeremiah: blessings versus woes. But the blessings aren't what you would expect. They turn things upside down. Instead of people striving and straining and reaching out to just even touch the edge of Jesus, to somehow save themselves, to plant themselves in even the shallowest way; instead of that, Jesus, through these "blessed are-s," is saying, "The kingdom of heaven is coming near. The kingdom of heaven is coming to you. Blessed are you when you aren't perfect. Blessed are you when you thirst for healing. Blessed are you when your leaves aren't green. God will bring the water. God will plant you when you cannot." You will feel the blessing more deeply having known the lack of blessing.

Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. In other words, woe to those who think they need nothing, who have it all figured out, whose roots are in riches; for theirs is but an earthly kingdom, fleeting and stunted. They have already received their consolation. Their water will dry up. Their roots are shallow. Those who truly thirst, who are truly poor, will drink all the more deeply of the true water Jesus is offering. God will set their roots deeply. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. But woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will

laugh. But woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep. In other words, if you are full now, laughing now, because of earthly treasures and pleasures alone, then you will end up like our tree: it's just a matter of time before you're in real trouble. But folks who really are in need of hope – folks who are hungry, who mourn and weep – they will trust in the LORD who meets them at their lowest points and builds them back up.

Jesus' teaching, his words: they are the deeper water. Jesus is the lifegiving stream. When Jesus teaches – and even more so, when Jesus shows love and compassion, when he offers a new covenant in his blood, when he dies on the cross and is raised to save us from our sins and trespasses – all of these things that Jesus does are like the river through the open plains, giving deep and abiding life to the trees along its banks in the midst of a harsher landscape. Jesus is the deep water that keeps our leaves green and keeps us producing fruit even in the driest of times. Jesus is the first fruits of the resurrection, and through the waters of baptism he gives resurrection, and we live through death as well.

Jesus is the life-giving stream. Jesus is the kingdom of heaven come near, coming to you, to bless you and nourish you and heal you, especially when you need those blessings the most. Especially when the world hates, reviles, excludes, and defames you on account of being rooted in Christ and loving in the way Christ loves.

Will we mess up? Of course. We'll always be lured away by what seems like the easier waters, wanting the earthly delights, people speaking well of us, the slimmest hem of what Jesus is about; but that end up leaving us high and dry, exposed and vulnerable. We'll always be tempted to put down roots in the wrong places. So we are saved and blessed and healed, not by our successes or full bellies or riches, not even by our good deeds or good intentions, but only by the grace of God. Woe to us if we get that backwards, because we'll always be left wanting more, always be thirsty.

Where are you planted today? On which side of all these contrasts are you? Do you feel blessed or woeful? Happy or cursed? Parched or green? Withered or fruitful? No matter how you feel or what you have done, Jesus comes to a level place and offers the deep water of his teaching, his love, and his salvation, to all of us. Jesus will tend to our roots, transplant us when necessary, lead us to the deep springs. Thanks be to God that Jesus heals all: the hungry and the full, the laughing and the mourning, the poor and the rich, the hated and the loved. May God draw our roots ever deeper into the love of Christ, and may we bear the fruit of that love for the world. Amen.

Let Justice Flow like Streams

1 Let jus - tice flow like streams of spar - kling wa - ter, pure,
2 Let righ - teous - ness roll on as oth - ers' cares we heed,
3 So may God's plumb line, straight, de - fine our mea - sure true,

en - a - bling growth, re - fresh - ing life, a - bun - dant, cleans - ing, sure.
an ev - er - flow - ing stream of faith trans - lat - ed in - to deed.
and jus - tice, right, and peace per - vade this world our whole life through.

Text: Jane Parker Huber, b. 1926
Music: ST. THOMAS, Aaron Williams, 1731–1776
Text © 1984 Jane Parker Huber, admin. Westminster John Knox Press.

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INSTALLATION OF LEADERS IN THE CONGREGATION

*PRAYERS

A: The Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us in abundance; so we are bold to pray for the church, the world, and all that God has made. *[Brief silence]*

A: Blessed are those whose trust is in you. Strengthen the faith of those who profess your name and bring reassurance to those who doubt or fear. Through your church speak continued blessing into the world. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

A: Those who trust in you are like trees planted by streams of water. Bless fruit trees with an abundant harvest. Protect rainforests from destruction. Restore land that has eroded after deforestation. Resurrect woodlands after forest fires. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

A: Search the hearts of those who govern, that they lead with humility. Inspire leaders to collaborate on policies that protect people and the planet. Sustain truth-tellers and social movements that challenge society to become more honest and just. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

A: Send your blessings of mercy upon those who long for consolation. Tend to those struggling with poverty, unemployment, or uncertainty. Provide for all who are hungry. Console those who face persecution. Grant peace to all who suffer or who are in need of any kind (*especially*). God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

A: Renew this congregation in our shared mission. As we plan and dream for the future you are preparing, inspire us by the examples of Martin Luther and all the reformers. Bless new projects and new ministry partnerships. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

A: Christ is raised from the dead, and so we cling to the hope of the resurrection. We praise you for the lives of the saints who lived and died in the hope of eternal life with you. God of grace,

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 Norman, Pfohl, and Philp 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. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

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: *Blessed are you, O God, Sovereign of the universe. You offer us new beginnings and guide us on our journey. Lead us to your table, nourish us with this heavenly food, and prepare us to carry your love to a hungry world, in the name of Christ our light. 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: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.

***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.

We give you thanks, gracious God, for we have feasted on the abundance of your house. Send us to bring good news and to proclaim your favor to all, strengthened with the richness of your grace in your Son, Jesus Christ.

C: Amen

***BLESSING**

P: God, who leads you in pathways of righteousness, who rejoices over you, and who calls you by name, ☩ bless your going out and your coming in, today and forever.

C: Amen

SENDING SONG *Jesus, the Very Thought of You*

(ELW 754)

Jesus, the Very Thought of You

1 Je - sus, the ver - y thought of you fills us with sweet de - light;
 2 No voice can sing, no heart can frame, nor can the mind re - call
 3 O Hope of ev - 'ry con - trite soul, O Joy of all the meek,
 4 O Je - sus, be our joy to - day; help us to prize your love;

but sweet-er far your face to view and rest with - in your light.
 a sweet-er sound than your blest name, O Sav - ior of us all!
 how kind you are to those who fall! How good to those who seek!
 grant us at last to hear you say: "Come, share my home a - bove."

Text: attr. Bernard of Clairvaux, 1091–1153; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814–1878
 Music: ST. AGNES, John B. Dykes, 1823–1876

***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

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WORSHIP ASSISTANTS – SUNDAY, February 13, 2022

Pianist: Debbie Walker
Lay Assistants: (1st Lay Asst.) Marilyn Gunn (2nd Lay Asst.) Anita Philp
Lectors: Anita Philp
Acolyte: Max Williams
Greeters: Jean Martin
Ushers: Gordon Gunn & Daren Williams
Altar Guild: Becky Collie & Leroy Deere
Counters: Donna Combs & Erna Jung

Announcements

PASTOR RYAN'S OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Ryan will be mostly virtual one more week. Please call or email him to set up an appointment, at 507-360-7276 and/or messiahmechpr@gmail.com.

WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

Here is this week's information based on our 2022 budget.

- Contributions to the general fund averaged \$2,993.11 (up from \$2,938.73 through February 6, 2022).
- We are \$6,473.37 behind the year-to-date budget needs. (increasing from \$5,666.37)
- Weekly budget need is \$4,072.

CONGREGATION REPORTING MEETING TODAY

Our annual reporting meeting will take place today following our worship service. Please plan to attend and learn about the active congregational life during 2021.

YEAR-END FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Please remember to pick up your year-end financial statements on the table in the narthex.

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

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

Please visit the Lutheran Disaster Response website to see how you can contribute to the ongoing aid and recovery efforts for the wildfires, tornadoes, and more, both in the U.S. and around the globe.