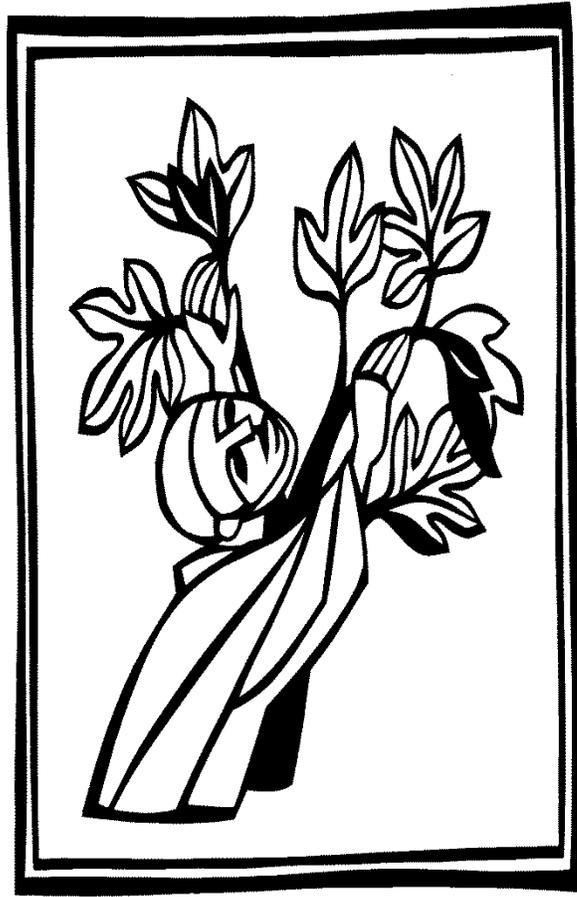


Messiah Lutheran Church
Mechanicsville, Virginia



March 20, 2022
Third 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.*

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 THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

MARCH 20, 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: In the name of God, who makes a way in the wilderness, walks with us, and guides us in our pilgrimage.

C: Amen

P: Holy One,

C: we confess that we have wandered far from you: we have not trusted your promises, we have ignored your prophets in our own day, we have squandered our inheritance of grace, we have failed to recognize you in our midst. Have mercy on us! Forgive us and turn us again to you. Teach us to follow in your ways, assure us again of your love, and help us to love our neighbor. Amen.

P: Beloved in Christ, the Word draws near to you, and all who call out to God shall be saved. In Jesus, God comes to you again and again and gathers you under wings of love. In ☩ Jesus' name, your sins are forgiven. God journeys with you and teaches you how to live in love.

C: Amen.

GATHERING SONG *In the Cross of Christ I Glory* (ELW 324)

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.

Text: John Bowring, 1792-1872
Music: RATHBUN, Ithamar Conkey, 1815-1867

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: **Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen**

FIRST LESSON Isaiah 55:1-9

Lector

A reading from Isaiah.

To those who have experienced long years in exile, the return to their homeland is a celebration of abundant life. God calls them into an everlasting covenant of love. Those who return to God will enjoy new life and forgiveness, because God's ways are not our ways.

¹Ho, everyone who thirsts,

come to the waters;

and you that have no money,

come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk

without money and without price.

²Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,

and your labor for that which does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,

and delight yourselves in rich food.

³Incline your ear, and come to me;

listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant,

my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁴See, I made him a witness to the peoples,

a leader and commander for the peoples.

⁵See, you shall call nations that you do not know,

and nations that do not know you shall run to you,

because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,

for he has glorified you.

⁶Seek the LORD while he may be found,

call upon him while he is near;

⁷Let the wicked forsake their way,

and the unrighteous their thoughts;

let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them,

and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸For my thoughts are not your thoughts,

nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth,

so are my ways higher than your ways

and my thoughts than your thoughts.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND LESSON: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Lector

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

Paul uses images from Hebrew Scriptures and prophecy to speak the truth of Jesus Christ: He is our rock, our water, our food, and our drink. Christ is the living sign of God's faithfulness.

¹I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

⁶Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." ⁸We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. ¹⁰And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹²So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Luke 13:1-9

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Asked about current tragic events, Jesus turns a lesson about whether suffering is deserved into a hard call to obedience. He then tells a parable that holds out hope that the timeline for ultimate judgment will be tempered by patience.

¹At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.²[Jesus] asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?"³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did."

⁶Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' ⁸He replied, 'Sir, let it

alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. 'If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.' "

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

Pastor Ryan Radtke

HYMN OF THE DAY *Beautiful Things* (ACS 925)

1 All this pain; I won - der if I'll
2 All this earth; ... could all that is
3 All a - round, ... hope is spring - ing

ev - er find my way. I won - der if my
lost ev - er be found? ... Could a gar - den
up from this old ground. ... Out of cha - os,

life could real - ly change at all.
come up from this ground at all?
life is be - ing found in you.

Refrain
You make beau-ti-ful things, you make beau-ti - ful things out of the dust.
You make beau - ti - ful things, you make beau-ti -
ful things out of us.

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: Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer these prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need. [*Brief silence*]

A: We pray for the church around the world in all its forms: for pastors, deacons, bishops, chaplains, and mission developers; for church councils, committee chairs, and all lay ministry leaders; for congregations that contemplate difficult decisions about the future of their ministry. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: For the health of this planet and the well-being of its creatures: for lands impacted by droughts and at risk of wildfires; for fig trees and vineyards that produce fruit for our nourishment and delight; for animal habitats threatened by climate change. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: For those called into positions of civic responsibility: for judges, attorneys, and court administrators tasked with uncovering truth and delivering justice; for activists and community leaders who cast a vision of a more compassionate and equitable society. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: For those who call upon you for mercy: for all who live in poverty and experience hunger; for any who feel tested beyond their strength; for those who are hospitalized or near death, and for all in need of healing (*especially*). Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: For the advocacy efforts of this congregation: for those whose faith leads them to speak difficult truths and engage in difficult conversations with policymakers; for those who promote mercy over vengeance or retaliation.

Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: For those whose earthly journeys have ended, we give thanks. With all the saints, we praise you for the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Merciful God,

C: receive 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 Warmbrod, Weaver and Whirley 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. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ.

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: Extravagant God, you have blessed us with the fullness of creation. Now we gather at your feast where you offer us the food that satisfies. Take and use what we offer here, come among us, and feed us with the body and blood of Christ, in whose name we pray. 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. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. 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: God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, you have brought us this far along the way.

In times of bitterness you did not abandon us, but guided us into the path of love and light. In every age you sent prophets to make known your loving will for all humanity. The cry of the poor has become your own cry; our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire. In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant to preach good news to the afflicted, to break bread with the outcast and despised, and to ransom those in bondage to prejudice and sin.

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 all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**C: *Christ has died.
Christ has risen.
Christ will come again.***

P: Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection, we await the day when Jesus shall return to free all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death. Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen.

C: *Amen.*

P: Send your Holy Spirit, our advocate, to fill the hearts of all who share this bread and cup with courage and wisdom to pursue love and justice in all the world. Come, Spirit of freedom! And let the church say, Amen.

C: *Amen.*

P: Join our prayers and praise with your prophets and martyrs of every age, that, rejoicing in the hope of the resurrection, we might live in the freedom and hope of your Son. Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, 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: Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

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.*

COMMUNION

***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.

Blessed Jesus, in this rich meal of grace, you have fed us with your body, the bread of life. Now send us forth to bear your life-giving hope to a world in need.

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 ☩ give you peace.

C: Amen

SENDING SONG *Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer* (ELW 618)

Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer

1 Guide me ev - er, great Re - deem - er, pil - grim through this
2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain where the heal - ing
3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious

bar - ren land. I am weak, but you are might - y; hold me
wa - ters flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me
fears sub - side; death of death and hell's de - struc - tion, land me

with your pow'r - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,
all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - 'rer, strong de - liv - 'rer,
safe on Ca - naan's side. Songs and prais - es, songs and prais - es

feed me now and ev - er - more, ev - er - more, feed me now and ev - er - more.
shield me with your might - y arm, might - y arm, shield me with your might - y arm.
I will raise for - ev - er - more, ev - er - more, I will raise for - ev - er - more.

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, March 20, 2022

- Pianist: Debbie Walker
- Lay Assistants: (1st Lay Asst) Teresa Gigante (2nd Lay Asst.) Will Radtke
- Lectors: Will Radtke
- Acolyte: Anna Radtke
- Greeters: Marilyn Gunn
- Ushers: Roger Schroeder & Gordon Gunn
- Altar Guild: Dianne Absher & Anita Philp
- Counters: Marilyn & Gordon Gunn

Announcements

PASTOR RYAN'S OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Ryan will be in and out of the office this 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 \$3,063.88 (down from \$3,216.56 through March 13, 2022).
- We are \$11,089.37 behind the year-to-date budget needs. (increasing from \$8,554.37)
- Weekly budget need is \$4,072.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

This Wednesday, March 23 at 6:30. We will continue our series on "The Chosen". if you have questions, call Rosalee Cline 347-2524. Hope to see you there!

COVID PROTOCOLS UPDATE FROM COUNCIL

As the Church Council continues to monitor the local COVID numbers, and using some new tools from the CDC, we are happy to announce a loose timetable to start bringing some of our worship practices back into the routine! We can start now with passing the offering plates. We are planning to have Communion at the altar rail and more singing on Easter – and an Easter breakfast! (Stay tuned for more info on that.) Following Easter we will bring back a fuller liturgy, with the sharing of the peace to follow some time later. For the time being, we will still ask Communion servers to wear masks.

Council also set some benchmarks on how to handle future surges in covid cases, if any. As long as Covid community levels stay below 10%, we will be able to proceed with all activities. Of course, anyone is still welcome to wear a mask if required to by their doctor or if they are simply more comfortable doing so. If community levels rise back up to between 10-20%, we will return to the limited worship format and some other protocols we've been doing for months, and masks will be requested. And if community levels rise above 20%, we will once again require masks, with further limits to activities. At that point Council would determine if measures like virtual or parking lot worship were necessary. Once Community levels dropped back down, Council would wait two weeks for stability before relaxing things again.

The Church Council is thankful that we've finally reached this stage. We still encourage everyone to show love and care for one another while individuals and families manage this transition in various ways. Not everyone feels the same way about this, and masks and Covid plans are part of life now. But we can handle diversity in feelings and opinions with respect and compassion and acceptance, because we are members of the body of Christ, and unity in the midst of diversity is what we are all about. Our unity is in Christ, and he taught us how to love our neighbors. Please keep your prayers and your care going. Thanks be to God!

LILIES FOR EASTER – ORDERS DUE APRIL 3RD

The sign-up sheet for Easter lilies is on the table in the narthex. Please help beautify our worship space. Lilies can be dedicated in memory or in honor of others if you wish. Please note next to your name and phone number the dedication you would like to have included in the Easter bulletin. Lilies are \$14.50 per plant. Please make sure you write **“Easter Lily Order”** on the memo line of your check and/or offering envelope Any questions can be directed to Donna Combs (746-1365).

QUILTERS GATHER TOGETHER (4/6, 4/20, 5/4, 5/18)

Quilters (and non-quilters) who are interested in learning about quilting and using their hands and hearts to make a Mission Quilt for Lutheran World Relief will gather in the narthex the first and third Wednesdays in April and May from 9:00 to 12:00 noon. Bring any of your favorite sewing supplies, extra cotton fabric that you may have (clean and pressed) and your enthusiasm. No special skills needed, we will gather to learn. Call Glady Hubert with any questions, 814-449-1392.

MCEF INFORMATION

During the month of February, MCEF served 94 households with food and 88 bags of clothing and linens. Seven households were assisted with utilities and/or utility bills to the amount of \$3500. Senior rides provided rides to 86 seniors for doctor's appointments and necessary personal business. The new Tools for Teachers-Hanover program has provided approximately 300 requests from teachers in the 4 middle schools in Hanover. Current inventory is low, community support is needed. A list of supplies and how to donate is on the website, 4mcef.com. Spring and summer clothing is now being accepted, needs include men's and older boy's underwear. All food items are being accepted, special needs are crunchy peanut butter.

The 3rd Monday of each month continues to be a fundraiser at Chicken Salad Chick, just say that you support MCEF and a portion of the sale is donated to MCEF. Looking for something to do? MCEF has many opportunities for volunteers. Call Pat Hubert 814-449-2612 for more information. Thank you for your continued donations and financial support.

"LETTER JOCKEYS" NEEDED ☺

Our beloved church sign has some dedicated volunteers who are coming up with the messages to put up – but they could use some help with the actual putting up. The message will change, on average, twice a month. You will receive training in how the letters are organized and how to change things out. If you'd like to be on the letter-rotating rotation, or if you would like more information, please talk to Linda Mahovtas or Pastor Ryan. Thanks!

LENTEN ACTIVITIES:

Lenten Devotions

A Lenten Devotion called *Grace Unbounded* is available to take home for a daily reading from the Gospel of Luke, as well as evocative images and brief reflections. You can find it on the sill of the bulletin board in the narthex.

Ecumenical Lenten Videos

Once again our group of local pastors from congregations (mostly) on Atlee

Road will produce weekly Lenten videos. The theme this year is "At Cross Purposes: Joy and Abundance in the Season of Lent." Lent is a season where we usually talk about giving things up – where is there abundance and joy in the midst of that? Keep an eye on the YouTube channel "Mechanicsville Ministry" for the next video, from Rev. Amy Dunn of Mechanicsville United Methodist Church.

God's Global Barnyard Drive

We are again collecting your coins and more to purchase animals and other items from the ELCA Good Gifts Catalog. The piggy banks are in the narthex keeping watch over the devotional books by the bulletin board. The funds we raise will go towards a shopping spree for our Sunday school students to select small gifts with big impacts for people in many corners of our world. Thanks in advance for your support and generosity – let's fill those piggies up!

Lenten Study

Please join us during Sunday adult Christian Formation time in the Fellowship Hall for a new series: "Wrestle with the Bible: Meeting God in difficult stories from Genesis." We'll cover a number of stories that are tough to talk about, and use our scriptural stretching as a practice for deeper Lenten devotion. Each conversation will be recorded and shared for those who would like to follow along from home. This week we'll be discussing the story of the Abram, Sarai, Hagar, and Ishmael.

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 – EASTERN EUROPE RESPONSE

Please visit the Lutheran Disaster Response website to see how you can contribute to the ongoing aid and recovery efforts for a variety of crises, both in the U.S. and around the globe. The situation is especially urgent right now in Ukraine, as well as other Eastern European countries where refugees fleeing Ukraine are seeking safety, such as Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. Just mark your donations "Eastern Europe Crisis Response."