

*Messiah Lutheran Church
Mechanicsville, Virginia*



*November 30, 2025
First Sunday of Advent*

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. 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

1st Sunday of Advent

November 30, 2025

Hearing Assistance Receivers are available upon request.

** Please stand as you are able **

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

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

C: Amen.

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

A brief silence is kept for reflection.

P: Long-expected God,

C: we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.

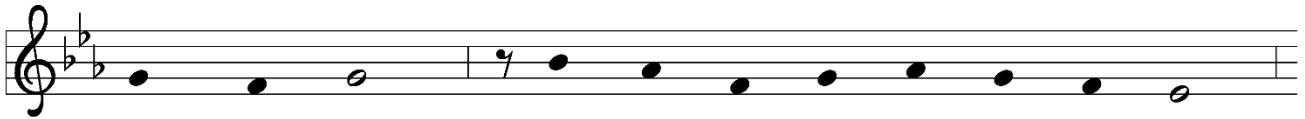
P: God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. † You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

C: Amen.





1 Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo - ple's ev - er -
 2 When this old world drew on toward night, you came; but not in
 3 At your great name, O Je - sus, now all knees must bend, all
 4 Come in your ho - ly might, we pray, re - deem us for e -
 5 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, and God the Spir - it,



last - ing light, O Christ, re - deem - er of us all,
 splen - dor bright, not as a mon - arch, but the child
 hearts must bow: all things on earth with one ac - cord,
 ter - nal day; de - fend us while we dwell be - low
 Three in One, praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry be



we pray you hear us when we call.
 of Mar - y, bless - ed moth - er mild.
 like those in heav'n, shall call you Lord.
 from all as - saults of our dread foe.
 from age to age e - ter - nal - ly. A - men.

Text: Latin hymn, 9th cent.; tr. *Hymnal* 1940, alt.
 Music: CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM, plainsong mode IV
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LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

- P: Blessed are you, God of Jacob, for you promise to transform weapons of war into implements of planting and harvest and to teach us your way of peace;
- C: **you promise that our night of sin is far gone and that your day of salvation is dawning.**
- P: As we light the first candle on this wreath,
- C: **wake us from our sleep, wrap us in your light, empower us to live honorably, and guide us along your path of peace.**
- P: O house of Jacob, come,
- C: **let us walk in the light of the Lord. Amen.**



1 Keep your lamps trimmed and burn - ing, keep your
 2 Dark - er mid - night lies be - fore us, dark - er
 3 Lo, the morn - ing soon is break - ing, lo, the
 4 Keep your lamps trimmed and burn - ing, keep your



lamps trimmed and burn - ing, keep your lamps
 mid - night lies be - fore us, dark - er mid - night
 morn - ing soon is break - ing, lo, the morn - ing
 lamps trimmed and burn - ing, keep your lamps



trimmed and burn - ing, for this work's al - most done.
 lies be - fore us, for this work's al - most done.
 soon is break - ing, for this work's al - most done.
 trimmed and burn - ing, for this work's al - most done.

Refrain



Chil-dren, don't grow wea - ry; chil-dren, don't grow wea - ry;



chil-dren, don't grow wea - ry, for this work's al-most done.

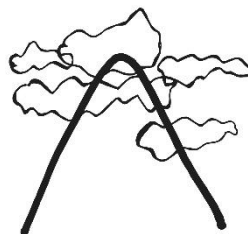
Text: African American spiritual
 Music: KEEP YOUR LAMPS, African American spiritual

***THE GREETING**

(ELW p. 147)

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.**



KYRIE

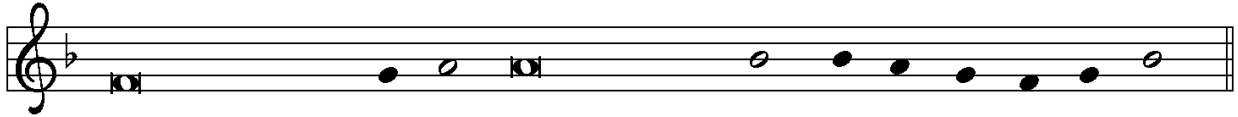
(ELW p. 165)



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



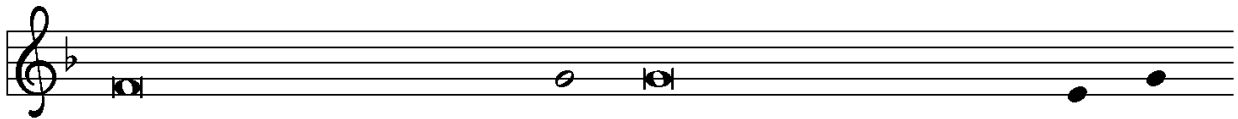
Lord, have mer - cy.



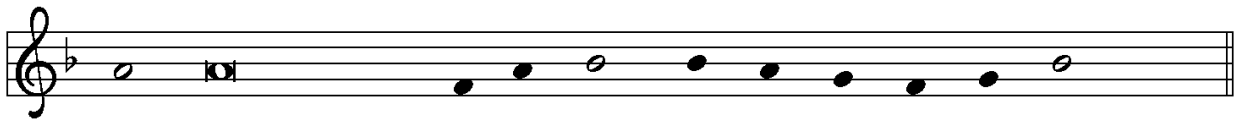
For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



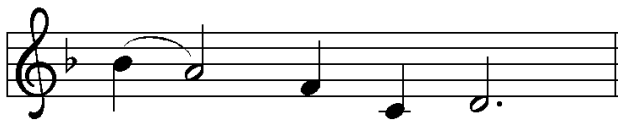
Lord, have mer - cy.



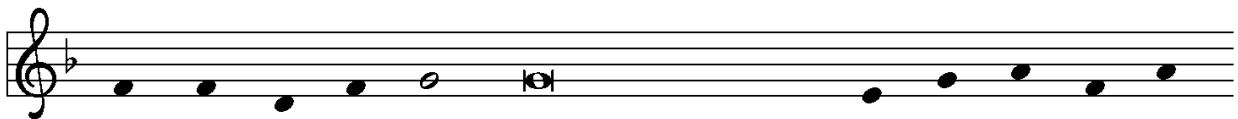
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of



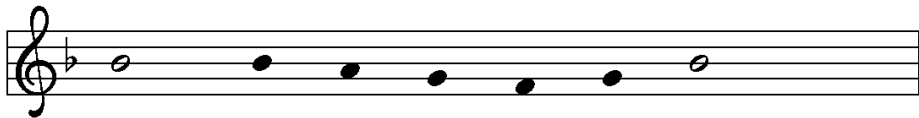
God, and for the uni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



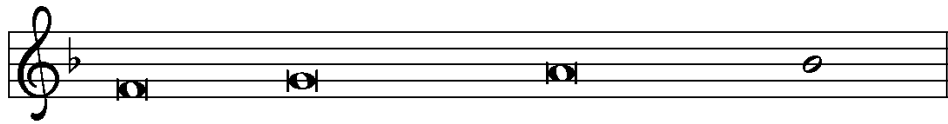
For this ho - ly house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and



praise, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gracious Lord.



A - men.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

(ELW p.167)

Refrain



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace



to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the



high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



1 Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - mighty God and Fa-ther,



we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

Refrain



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace



to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the



high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God,



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world:



have mer - cy on us; you are seat - ed at the right



hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.

Refrain



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace



to God's peo-ple on earth. Glo-ry to God in the



high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

3 For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.

Final refrain

Glo - ry to God in the high - est.

A - men, a - men.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray:

C: *Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection save us from the threatening dangers of our sins, and enlighten our walk in the way of your salvation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

FIRST READING: Isaiah 2:1-5

Lector

The visionary message presented in this reading focuses on a future day when God establishes a universal reign of peace. Divine decisions will make war obsolete, and the worshiping community responds: "Let us walk in the light of that Lord now!"

A reading from Isaiah.

¹The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

²In days to come

the mountain of the 's house
shall be established as the highest of the mountains
and shall be raised above the hills;
all the nations shall stream to it.

³Many peoples shall come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the ,

to the house of the God of Jacob,
 that he may teach us his ways
 and that we may walk in his paths.”
 For out of Zion shall go forth instruction
 and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
 4 He shall judge between the nations
 and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
 they shall beat their swords into plowshares
 and their spears into pruning hooks;
 nation shall not lift up sword against nation;
 neither shall they learn war any more.
 5 O house of Jacob,
 come, let us walk
 in the light of the Lord!

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Romans 13:11-14

Lector

Paul compares the advent of Christ to the coming of dawn. We live our lives today in light of Christ's coming in the future.

A reading from Romans.

11 Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is already the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; 12 the night is far gone; the day is near. Let us then throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; 13 let us walk decently as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in illicit sex and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14 Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

(ELW p. 171)



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

***GOSPEL: Matthew 24:36-44**

Jesus describes his second coming as a sudden, turbulent event that will bring about deep change to our normal, day-to-day lives. Therefore, he urges people to stay awake, be aware, and wait expectantly, because the Son of Man will come unannounced.

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew.

C: *Glory to you, O Lord.*

[Jesus said to the disciples,] ³⁶ "About that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷ For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so, too, will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Then two will be in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken, and one will be left. ⁴² Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

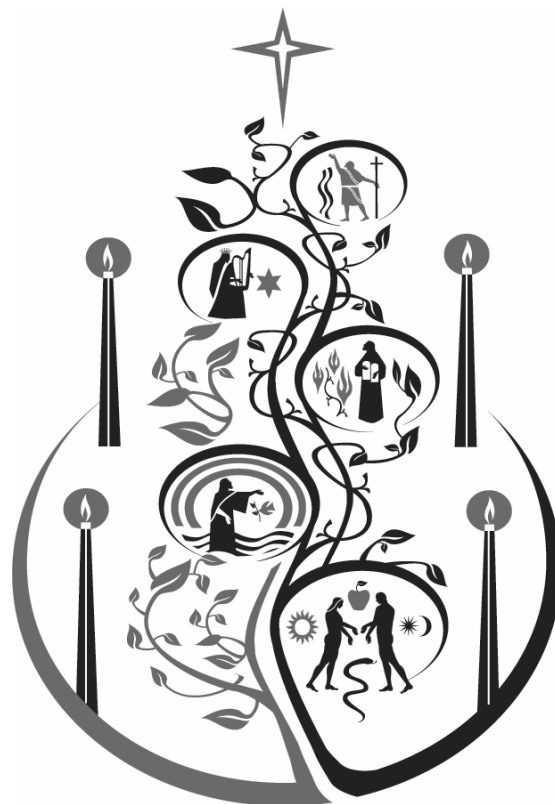
P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: *Praise to you, O Christ.*

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

Pastor Ryan Radtke



***HYMN OF THE DAY- Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn**

ELW 242



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing, Sing out your joy, for
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
Music: REJOICE, REJOICE, Marty Haugen
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***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 OF INTERCESSION**

A: In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A: God of the people, we come seeking wisdom and instruction. Uphold and strengthen lay leaders, teachers, deacons, pastors, and bishops. Teach us your ways and lead us in your paths. God of grace,

C: *hear our prayer.*

A: God of the earth, we seek your goodness in the grandeur of creation. Empower us to care for forests and oceans, as we see you in the world around us. God of grace,

C: *hear our prayer.*

A: God of the nations, grant wisdom to leaders, judges, and mediators. Cast out words of hate and transform them into words for building up community. Remake implements of war to sow peace. God of grace,

C: *hear our prayer.*

A: God of healing, bring comfort and strength. We pray for our kindred and companions who are ill or despairing (*especially*). Surround all with care and consolation. God of grace,

C: *hear our prayer.*

A: God of new possibilities, when addiction wounds, jealousy tears down, and relationships fray, show us how to journey with one another. Nurture therapists, counselors, and sponsors in their care for others. God of grace,

C: *hear our prayer.*

A: God of all time, build up our lives that we would reflect your grace. At the last, bring us with all the saints to your holy city where peace and goodness make a home. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God of all relationships, bless this branch of the body of Christ that is Messiah Lutheran Church. Strengthen all its relationships and weave your love and grace into each family and household. We especially pray this week for the Combs, Cramer, and Deere families. Make us your people. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: We offer these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your grace and unyielding love; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen.

***PEACE**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

OFFERING – You may place an “I give online” card in the plate as a physical offering

***OFFERING SONG – Create in Me a Clean Heart**

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923
Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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***OFFERING PRAYER**

A: Let us pray:

C: Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

(ELW p. 152)

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 our 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 comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. 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:

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

(ELW p. 173)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow - er and might,
heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P: Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

P: With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

C: Come, Lord Jesus.

P: Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, 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.**

COMMUNION

COMMUNION SONG – Lamb of God

(ELW p. 174)

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -
way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

***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**



***SONG AFTER COMMUNION – Praise to You, O God of Mercy**

ELW 208



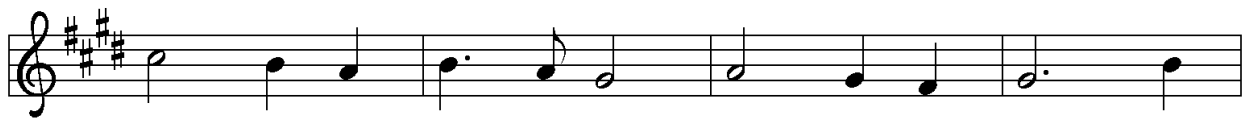
1 Praise to you, O God of mer - cy: thanks be to you for -
2 From of old you loved and sought us: thanks be to you for -
3 Praise to you, O God of mer - cy: thanks be to you for -



ev - er! Rais - ing high the weak and low - ly:
ev - er! Truth and jus - tice you have taught us:
ev - er! Rais - ing high the weak and low - ly:



thanks be to you for - ev - er!
thanks be to you for - ev - er!
thanks be to you for -



Strong is your faith - ful - ness, strong is your love, re -



mem - b'ring your cov - e - nant of life with us.

⊕ Coda



ev - er! Thanks be to you for - ev - er!

Text and music: *Now the Feast and Celebration*, Marty Haugen, b. 1950
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***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

A: Let us pray. God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

***BLESSING**

P: May God who comes among us, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always.

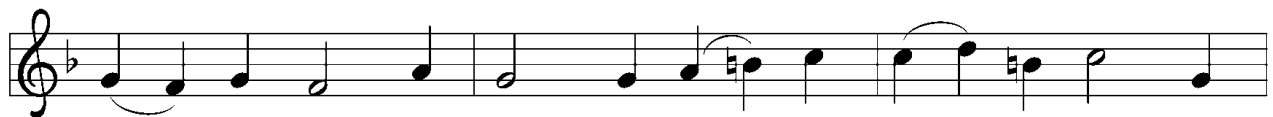
C: Amen

***SENDING SONG – Fling Wide the Door**

ELW 259



1 Fling wide the door, un - bar the gate; the King of glo - ry
2 He is the rock of our be - lief, the heart of mer - cy's
3 Oh, hap - py towns and bless - ed lands that live by their true
4 Come, Lord, our Sav - ior, Je - sus Christ; our hearts are o - pen



comes in state; the Lord of lords and King of kings, the
gen - tle self. His king - ly crown is ho - li - ness; his
king's com-mands. And bless - ed be the hearts he rules, the
wide in trust. Oh, show us now your love - ly grace, up -



Sav - ior of the world who brings his great sal - va - tion
scep - ter is his love - li - ness; he brings our sor - rows
hum - ble plac - es where he dwells. He is the right - ful
on our sor - rows shine your face, and let your Ho - ly



to the earth. So raise a shout of ho - ly mirth and
to an end. Now glad - ly praise our king and friend, and
Son of bliss who fills our lives and makes us his, cre -
Spir - it guide our jour - ney in your grace so wide. We



praise our God and Lord, Cre - a - tor, Spir - it, Word.
wor - ship him with song for sav - ing us from wrong.
a - tor of the world, our on - ly strength for good.
praise your ho - ly name, from age to age the same!

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590–1635; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943
Music: MACHT HOCH DIE TÜR, J. A. Freylinghausen, *Geistreiches Gesangbuch*, 1704
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

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***DISMISSAL**

A: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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SUNDAY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS – November 30, 2025

- Pianist: Debbie Walker
- Lay Assistants: (1st Lay Asst.) Marilyn Gunn (2nd Lay Asst.) Donna Combs
- Lector: Nancy Berg
- Acolyte: Will Radtke
- Greeter: Sue Gilnett
- Ushers: Gordon Gunn & Doug Duke
- Altar Guild: Lois Schroeder & Lorrie Albertson
- Counters: Gordon & Marilyn Gunn
- Live Streamer: Donna Shaw

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MESSIAH

November 30	Christian Formation	9:15 AM
	Worship Service	10:45 AM
December 2	Banner Team	1:00 PM
	AA	5:30 PM
December 3	PAL Quilt Group	9:00 AM
December 4	Hanover Adult Center	12:00 PM
December 6	Congregational Work Day – Property Clean-up	9:00 AM
December 7	Christian Formation	9:15 AM
	Worship Service	10:45 AM
	First Sunday Fellowship	
	Sanctuary Decoration	
	End of <i>Piece by Piece</i> Drive for EnCircle	
December 9	AA	5:30 PM
December 10	Women’s Bible Study	10:00 AM
	Hanover Adult Center	12:00 PM
	Women’s Bible Study	6:30 PM
December 11	Hanover Adult Center	12:00 PM
December 14	Christian Formation	9:15 AM
	Worship Service	10:45 AM
	Annual Business Meeting	
December 16	Old Ivy Garden Club	9:15 AM
	Banner Team	1:00 PM
	AA	5:30 PM
	Messiah Church Council Meeting	6:15 PM
December 17	PAL Quilt Group	9:00 AM
December 18	Hanover Adult Center	12:00 PM

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Announcements

PASTOR RYAN'S OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Ryan is at Lost and Found this weekend, and will be in and out of the office this week but aims to be in on Wednesday and Friday. As always, to set up an appointment with Pastor Ryan, please call or email at 507-360-7276 and/or messiahmechpr@gmail.com.

WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

Numbers For the 46th Sunday of 2025:

- Average Contributions to current were \$3,489.77
- Contributions for current Nov 16th were \$4,426.00
- The YTD total contribution to current is \$160,529.27
- For comparison, current YTD 2024 was \$171,441.41
- Designated Giving for the 46th Sunday was \$300.00

ADVENT DEVOTIONS AND CALENDARS

There are two different Advent devotions and some Advent calendars (one per household, please) available to pick up in the narthex by the bulletin board.

POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS

Advent and Christmas will be here before we know it! In order to enhance our worship space we will be using live poinsettias around the altar area as before, and we would like to give you the opportunity to donate one or more. The cost is a donation of \$17.50. You may place payment in the weekly offering (please mark the envelope/check "poinsettia." Please sign up on the sheet in the narthex by **TODAY**, as the florist has an early deadline.

SHARE YOUR MUSICAL GIFTS AND TALENTS

Are you a singer? Maybe you play an instrument? We'd love to hear you! Messiah's Worship Team would like to invite folks with musical gifts to share them in worship. You could sing a solo or duet...you could play during the prelude or postlude...you could join in on a hymn...or whatever else might work! Don't have time in your schedule to be a regular choir member? Consider joining choir for a special festival anthem for Christmas or Easter or another special occasion. Music is a truly a gift! If you have questions or curiosities or ideas about what might work for you, please talk to Debbie!

Y.O.U.T.H. IN ACTION (YOUTHFUL OUTREACH TO UPLIFT AND THRIVE IN HOLINESS)

The Youth Christmas Shop's Grand Opening was a great success! Thank you for your support! Check back each week as new items will be added.

WINTER CELEBRATION REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

Winter Celebration, the Virginia Synod's annual winter faith formation event for youth grades 9-12, will be happening January 23-25 at Eagle Eyrie Conference Center in Lynchburg. Early bird registration ends on December 15th. If you'd like to attend, or be a small group leader, or have any questions, please contact Pastor Ryan.

MAKING PREPARATIONS

Our adult class during Christian formation for this season of Advent will get us up and moving and looking at our building, our congregation, and our practices through the eyes of others that sometimes find churches to be difficult places to be in. Our dearest aspiration is to truly mean it when we say "all are welcome"; these discussions will aim to prayerfully prepare such a welcome, especially where we might not even realize we have room to grow and change.

BANNER TEAM

The Banner Team will meet on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Next month we will meet on December 2 and 16 in the church fellowship hall. We are making good progress on our current banner project and plan on keeping up the work! We meet at 1:00 p.m. in the church fellowship hall and anyone who is interested in joining us is welcome! (P.S. please bring your own scissors.)

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

All Messiah Members are encouraged to attend our Annual Congregational Business Meeting on Sunday, December 14, following the worship service. We will discuss and vote on the proposed 2026 budget, we will ask for nominations and vote to fill open positions on our church council, and we'll discuss any other business of the congregation.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The Women's Bible Study groups have planned to get together on December 10th for a Christmas party. We have not yet been able to decide exactly what we are going to do. Watch for details in the church bulletin or talk to Nancy Berg, Marilyn Gunn or Donna Combs.

DAY OF CELEBRATIONS!

Sunday, December 7th will be a day of celebrations! We celebrate our congregational family with First Sunday Fellowship! **You are invited to bring in some Christmas cookies or other treats to share!** We celebrate the coming of our Lord as we decorate our sanctuary! And we celebrate the conclusion of the *Piece by Piece* drive for foster children through enCircle! Please stick around after worship and join the celebrations!

PROPERTY CLEAN-UP

We will have a congregational work day on December 6 at 9:00 AM to get the property cleaned up and ready for Christmas. Stay tuned for more details, including sign-up sheets, a to-do list, and a chance to claim a task even if you can't be here on the 6th. As they say, many hands make light work. Thanks in advance!





BLESSING FOSTER FAMILIES “PIECE BY PIECE”

STRENGTH AND COURAGE

Our puzzle continues to grow beautifully! This week we added **\$290**, bringing our total to **\$480** — which means we are now only **\$220** away from reaching our goal of **\$700**. Thank you for the extraordinary generosity and compassion that continues to flow through our congregation. Each piece added brings us closer to blessing our foster families with joy, connection, and hope this Christmas.

If you would like to contribute, donations may be given directly to **Stephanie** or **Marilyn**, or you may write a check to the church. If paying by check, please note **“Piece by Piece Foster Children Program”** on the memo line so your gift can be directed appropriately.

There is still time to sign one or more of the cards to accompany the gifts. If you haven't written one yet—or if you feel called to write an additional message—your words of encouragement can offer comfort, affirmation, and warmth to a child or caregiver who may need it most.

Some children in foster care carry not only emotional scars but also physical or developmental challenges that require special care. Their strength is often quiet but deeply inspiring. This week's story reminds us how powerful simple compassion can be for a child who feels forgotten.

A Young Woman with Special Needs and a Strong Spirit

A young woman entered foster care after suffering neglect and abuse. She lives with intellectual disabilities and depends on consistent support, yet her family has chosen not to participate in her care or visit her. Still, she meets each day with courage and quiet determination. Surrounded by people who believe in her worth, she is learning new skills, discovering her strengths, and realizing that she is not alone.

Next Sunday, **December 7**, we'll celebrate together as **Pastor Ryan leads us in a blessing** over the puzzle, the gifts, and the cards before they are delivered to the families. What a beautiful way to conclude this season of generosity, compassion, and faith in action.

As we continue building our puzzle piece by piece, may our hearts remain open, our prayers abundant, and our community united in love for the children and families we are called to serve.