

*Messiah Lutheran Church
Mechanicsville, Virginia*



*December 7, 2025
Second 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

2nd Sunday of Advent

December 7, 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.



***GATHERING SONG – Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus**

ELW 254



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

P: Blessed are you, God of hope, for you promise to bring forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse

C: **who will bring justice to the poor, who will deliver the needy and crush the oppressor, who will stand as a signal of hope for all people.**

P: As we light these candles,

C: **turn our wills to bear the fruit of repentance, transform our hearts to live in justice and harmony with one another, and fix our eyes on the root of Jesse, Jesus Christ, the hope of all nations.**

P: O people of hope, come,

C: **let us rejoice in the faithfulness of the Lord. Amen..**

Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning (Verses 1 and 2)

ACS 949



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;



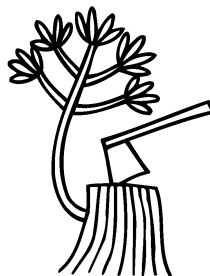
chil-dren, don't grow wea - ry, for this work's al-most done.

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

***THE GREETING**

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

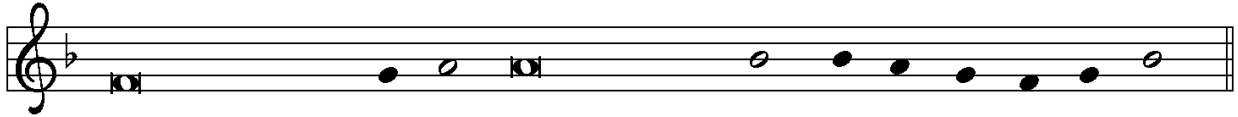
(ELW p. 165)



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



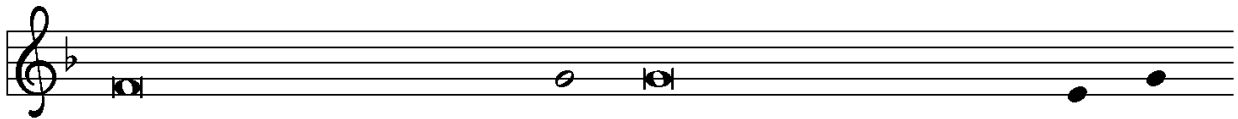
Lord, have mer - cy.



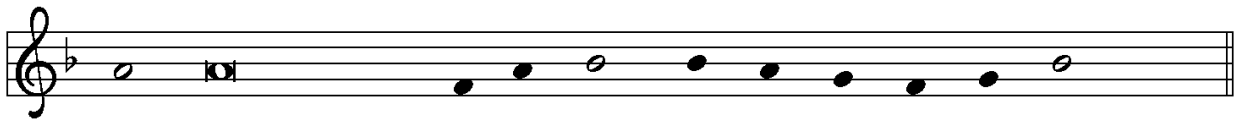
For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



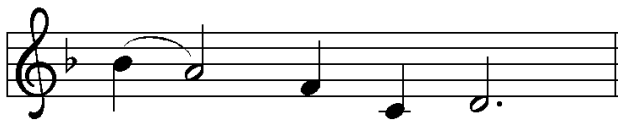
Lord, have mer - cy.



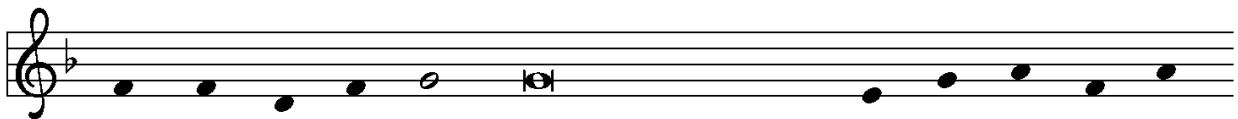
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of



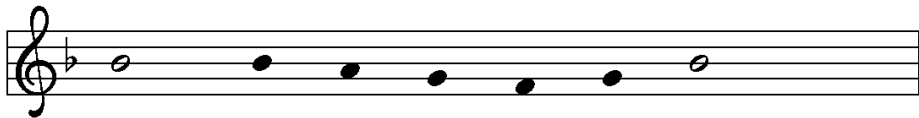
God, and for the uni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



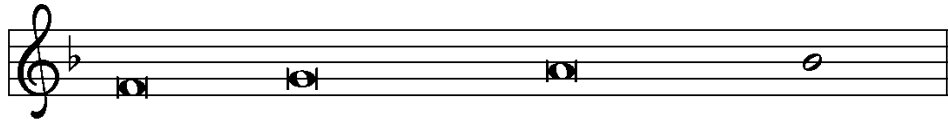
For this ho - ly house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and



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



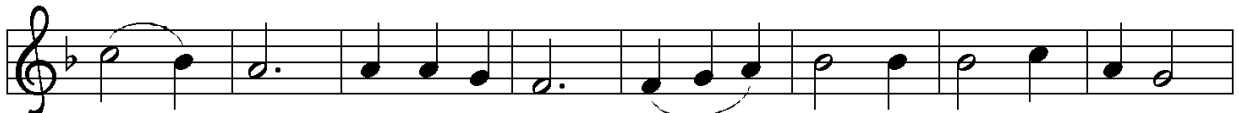
Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace



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.



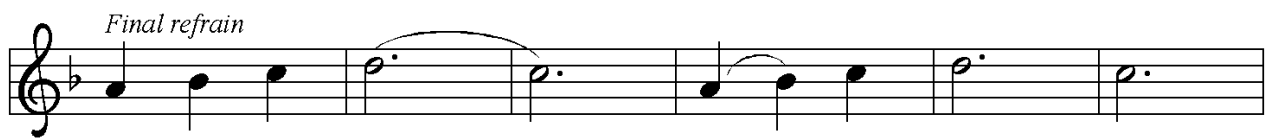
3 For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a -



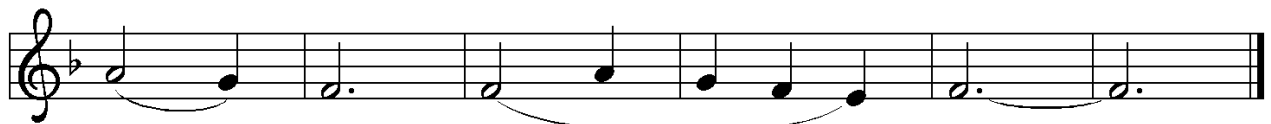
lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly



Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.



Glo - ry to God in the high - est.



A - men, a - men.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray:

C: *Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

FIRST READING: Isaiah 11:1-10

Lector

Isaiah describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David's royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.

A reading from Isaiah.

- ¹ A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
- ² The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
- ³ His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see
or decide by what his ears hear,
⁴but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
⁵Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
⁶The wolf shall live with the lamb;
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the lion will feed together,
and a little child shall lead them.
⁷The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
⁹They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Romans 15:4-13

Lector

God's promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.

A reading from Romans.

⁴Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.

⁵May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors ⁹and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles
and sing praises to your name";

¹⁰ and again he says,
"Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people";

¹¹ and again,
"Praise the Lord, all you gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him";

¹² and again Isaiah says,
"The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the gentiles;
in him the gentiles shall hope."

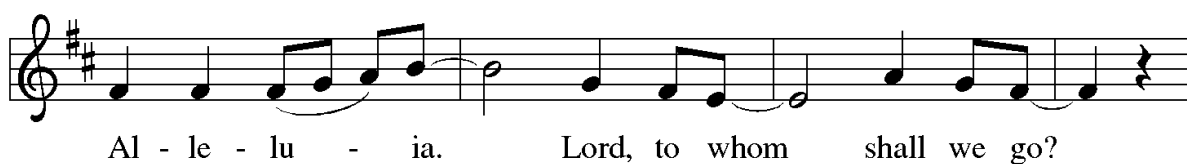
¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

(ELW p. 171)



***GOSPEL: Matthew 3:1-12**

Just before Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist appears, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ² "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." ³ This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.' "

⁴ Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, ⁶ and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, ⁹ and do not

presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ "I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

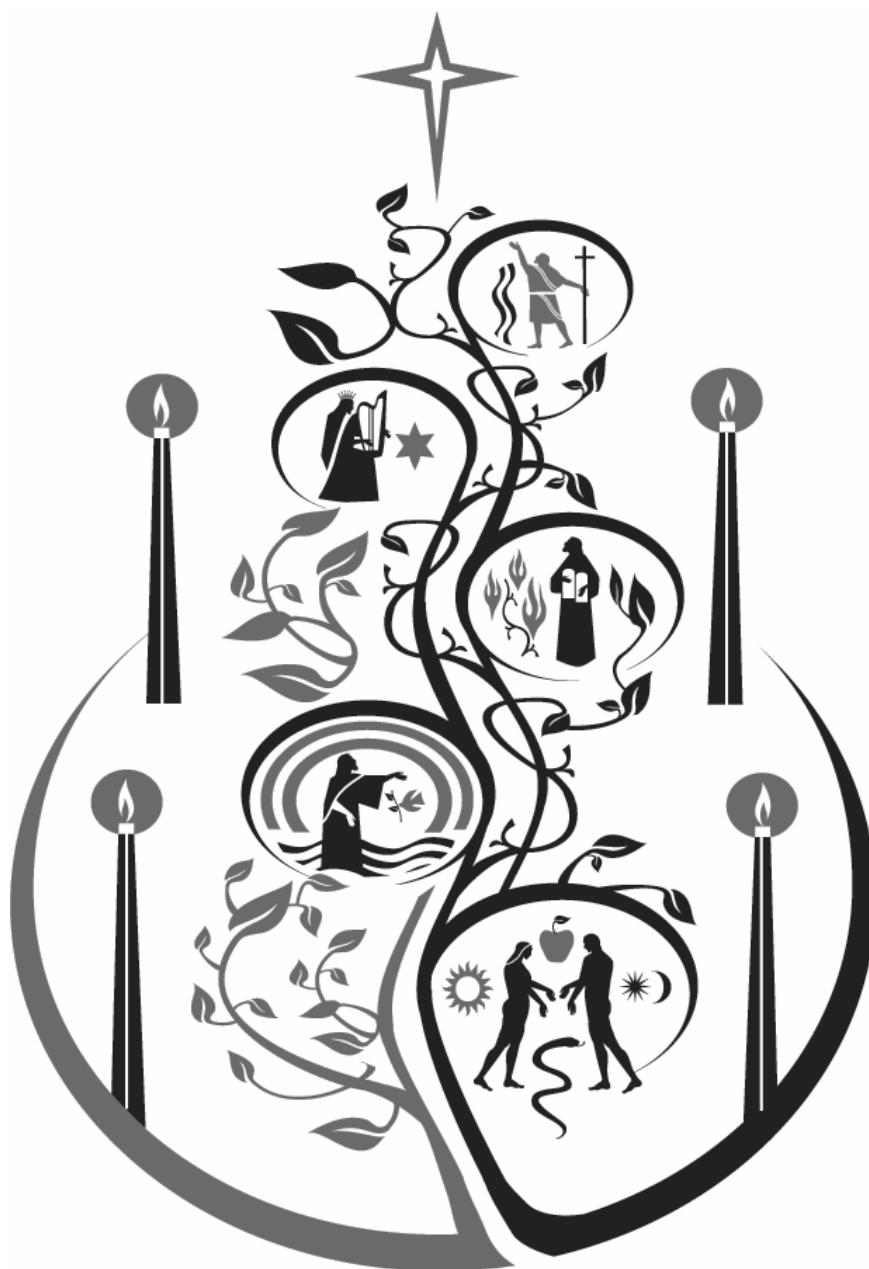
P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

Pastor Ryan Radtke





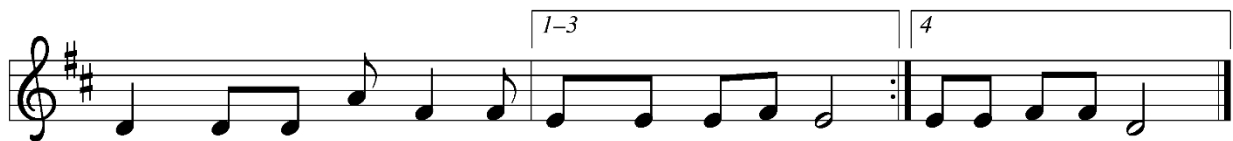
To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra al Sal - va - dor
 1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
 2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:
 3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;
 4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



y el sur - co a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el
 Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the
 "A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -
 new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most
 This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -
 la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
 ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -
 here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All -
 world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad. dar - nos li - ber - tad.
 God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.
 stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.
 clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!
 Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

2 *Dice el profeta al pueblo de Israel:*
 "De madre virgen ya viene Emmanuel,"
 será "Dios con nosotros," hermano será,
 con él la esperanza al mundo volverá.

3 *Montes y valles habrá que preparar;*
 nuevos caminos tenemos que trazar.
 Él está ya muy cerca, venido a encontrar,
 y todas las puertas abrid de par en par.

4 *En una cueva Jesús apareció,*
 pero en el mundo está presente hoy.
 Vive en nuestros hermanos, con ellos está;
 y vuelve de nuevo a darnos libertad.

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946
 Music: TODA LA TIERRA, Alberto Taulé
 Spanish text and tune © 1993 and English text © 1995 Centro de Pastoral Litúrgica, admin. OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.

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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: With wisdom and understanding, inspire the faithful around the world. Unite hearts and minds in work to address poverty, access to housing, and equity among peoples. God of grace,

C: *hear our prayer.*

A: With counsel and might, move us to care for creation. As we dream of the day when all creatures will flourish alongside one another, guide us in ways humanity and all creation will mutually thrive. God of grace,

C: *hear our prayer.*

A: With righteousness and faithfulness, encourage nations to live in harmony with one another. We pray for international student and teacher exchanges, for our partner churches, and for the shared mission of Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response. God of grace,

C: *hear our prayer.*

A: With steadfastness and encouragement, strengthen those who have lost hope in the face of grief, depression, or disease (*especially*). Renew the spirits of those recovering from surgery and medical procedures. God of grace,

C: *hear our prayer.*

A: With welcome and hospitality, embolden us in our shared ministry to overcome all that divides. In acts of repentance, reconciliation, and reparation, may we serve in the way of Christ. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

A: With joy and peace, we remember our ancestors in the faith. Fill us with the hope of the Holy Spirit now and into the ages of ages. 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 DeGraff, Duke, and Dworak families. Make us your people. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

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**





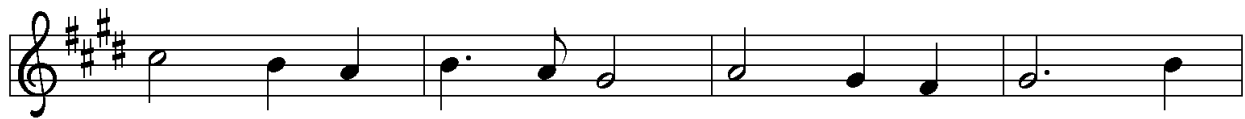
1 Praise to you, O God of mer - cy: thanks be to you for -
 2 From of old you loved and sought us: thanks be to you for -
 3 Praise to you, O God of mer - cy: thanks be to you for -



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.



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 OF GIFTS

*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 – *Prepare the Royal Highway*

ELW 264



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
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*DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

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SUNDAY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS – December 7, 2025

Pianist: Debbie Walker
Lay Assistants: (1st Lay Asst.) Nancy Berg (2nd Lay Asst.) Diana Sondor
Lector: Leroy Albertson
Acolyte: Kate Radtke
Greeter: Rosalee Duke
Ushers: Chris Sondor & Doug Duke
Altar Guild: Donna Combs & Marilyn Gunn
Counters: Donna Combs & Erna Jung
Live Streamer: Teresa Gigante



Altar Flowers given by Donna Combs



OPPORTUNITIES FOR MESSIAH

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 13	Property Work Day – *new date	9:00 AM
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
December 21	Christian Formation	9:15 AM
	Worship Service	10:45 AM
	Manna Sunday	
December 23	AA	5:30 PM
December 24	Messiah Christmas Eve Worship	7:00 PM
December 25-26	Church Office Closed	

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Announcements

PASTOR RYAN'S OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Ryan will be in and out of the office this week but aims to be in on Tuesday 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 48th Sunday of 2025:

- Average Contributions to current were \$3,409.46
- Contributions for current Nov 30th were \$3,125.00
- The YTD total contribution to current is \$163,654.27
- For comparison, current YTD 2024 was \$172,854.41
- Designated Giving for the 48th Sunday was \$670

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.

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)

Visit the Youth Christmas Shop before and after service each Sunday until December 21st! Our handmade one-of-a-kind gifts make great gifts for family, friends, neighbors and teachers. And yourselves! Why not?! New inventory arrives each week. Don't miss out!

Hey youth! Don't forget about the Dunkin' Donuts field trip at **10:00am on December 21st!** Bring your own money if you want something else besides donuts.

ALL SOULS INVITATION - *UPDATE*

All Souls Episcopal Church will be having a Special Sunday today with an afternoon Advent Outreach Project and Worship. It begins at 3pm and worship is at 4pm followed by Chili Potluck. Folks from Messiah are welcome to join. Due to the expected cold weather, the event will move from Atlee House to Messiah Lutheran.

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. This month we will meet on December 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.

PROPERTY CLEAN-UP

We will have a congregational work day on December 13 at 9:00 AM to get the property cleaned up and ready for Christmas. (This is rescheduled from December 6). 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 13th. As they say, many hands make light work. Thanks in advance!





BLESSING FOSTER FAMILIES “PIECE BY PIECE”

BLESSING AND BELONGING

This Sunday marks the joyful conclusion of our *Piece by Piece* Christmas outreach. Today we will place the **final pieces** into our puzzle and celebrate the incredible generosity that has poured from this congregation over the past five weeks. Each gift, each prayer, and each handwritten card has helped create a picture of compassion and hope that we will soon share with the foster families we are honoring this season.

During worship, **Pastor Ryan will lead us in a blessing** over the gifts, the puzzle, and the cards before they are delivered later this week. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this project—your kindness is a powerful reflection of our “Small Church. Big Heart.” spirit.

We are excited to share that our congregation has shown extraordinary generosity this year. While we will reveal the **final total during the blessing**, we can already say this: *you have gone above and beyond*, surpassing our goal in ways that will make a meaningful difference for the families we are supporting.

As we gather in gratitude and celebration, we lift up our final story—one that speaks to the love, longing, and resilience found within family bonds.

A Sibling Group Holding on to Family Ties

Two siblings were removed from their home after living in poverty and homelessness. They are part of a large family of nine children who had been sharing a single hotel room with their grandmother and mother. Their goal has recently changed to adoption, bringing both excitement and sadness—hope for a permanent family, but sorrow over being separated from their other siblings. Even through tears and longing, these children continue to show deep love for one another and a beautiful resilience of spirit.

As we bless the gifts today, may we hold these children—and all children in foster care—in our prayers. May our puzzle remind us that when we come together piece by piece, love takes shape in ways that truly matter.