

***Messiah Lutheran Church
Mechanicsville, Virginia***



***March 29, 2026
Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion***

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

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Pastor: The Rev. Ryan Radtke

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Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion

March 29, 2026

Hearing Assistance Receivers are available upon request.

*** Please stand as you are able ***

All may pick up palm branches. Gather in the parking lot if able; be seated in the sanctuary if needed.

***ACCLAMATION**

P: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

C: Hosanna in the highest!

***PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL: Matthew 21:1-11**

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." ⁴ This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

⁵ "Tell the daughter of Zion,

Look, your king is coming to you,

humble and mounted on a donkey,

and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷ they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸ A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

¹⁰ When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" ¹¹ The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

P: The gospel of the Lord.

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

REFLECTION

*BLESSING OF PALMS

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us pray: We praise you, O God, for redeeming the world through our Savior Jesus Christ. Today he entered the holy city in triumph and was proclaimed messiah and king by those who spread garments and branches along his way. Bless these branches and those who carry them. Grant us grace to follow our Lord in the way of the cross, so that, joined to his death and resurrection, we enter into life with you; through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

* PROCESSION – 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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WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

QUILT BLESSING

P: God, our neighbors around the world are in need of hope. Your Spirit is a mighty force, your whispers of hope bring light into the world. Open our hearts and hands to see your presence in our neighborhoods and across the world.

C: Jesus, help us speak words of hope to our neighbors.

P: God, we give you thanks for the pieces of fabric, thread, sewing machines, and all the other tools and materials used to fashion these quilts. May their presence be a sign of hope, and may they wrap our neighbors in unending love.

C: Jesus, help us reach out in hope to our neighbors.

P: God, we give thanks for PAL and all the hands that fashioned hope into a quilt, for the hands that collected and laid out and measured and sewed, for the hands that continually open wider so that no one feels left out.

C: Jesus, help us see hope in our neighbors.

P: God, we ask you to guide the staff and partners at Lutheran World Relief. May their voices and hands be a beacon of hope. Keep them safe. Keep them filled with your strength and perseverance.

C: Jesus, help us share a taste of hope with our neighbors.

P: God, be with our neighbors who will receive these gifts. May they be wrapped in love, may they taste your goodness, may they touch signs of your hope. Whether or not we know their names or where they live, they are our neighbors, our brothers and sisters in Christ. We pray all this in the name of Jesus, the One who is our hope.

C: Amen.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: As we now enter into the contemplation of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and meditate on the salvation of the world through his sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection, let us pray.

C: Everlasting God, in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 50:4-9a

Lector

The servant of the Lord expresses absolute confidence in his final vindication, despite the fact that he has been struck and spit upon. This characteristic of the servant played an important role in the early church's understanding of the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

A reading from Isaiah.

⁴The Lord GOD has given me
a trained tongue,

that I may know how to sustain
the weary with a word.
Morning by morning he wakens,
wakens my ear
to listen as those who are taught.

⁵The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious;
I did not turn backward.

⁶I gave my back to those who struck me
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;
I did not hide my face
from insult and spitting.

⁷The Lord GOD helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;
⁸he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?
Let us stand in court together.

Who are my adversaries?
Let them confront me.

^{9a}It is the Lord GOD who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND LESSON: Philippians 2:5-11

Lector

Paul uses an early Christian hymn to help us comprehend Jesus' obedient selflessness on the cross and how God has made Christ lord over all reality. The perspective of the cross becomes the way we rightly understand God, Christ, our own lives, and fellowship within the community of Christ.

A reading from Philippians.

⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶who, though he existed in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be grasped,

⁷but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
assuming human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a human,

⁸he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God exalted him even more highly
and gave him the name
that is above every other name,
¹⁰so that at the name given to Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 26:14—27:66

In fulfillment of scripture and obedience to God's will, Jesus goes to the cross so that a new covenant in his blood may bring forgiveness of sins. Even the soldiers who crucify him recognize him to be the Son of God.

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁴One of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests
¹⁵and said, "What will you give me if I betray him to you?" They paid him thirty
pieces of silver. ¹⁶And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity
to betray him.

¹⁷On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying,
"Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the
Passover?" ¹⁸He said, "Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, 'The
Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my
disciples.' " ¹⁹So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they
prepared the Passover meal.

²⁰When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve disciples, ²¹and
while they were eating he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me."
²²And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after
another, "Surely not I, Lord?" ²³He answered, "The one who has dipped his
hand into the bowl with me will betray me. ²⁴The Son of Man goes as it is
written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It
would have been better for that one not to have been born." ²⁵Judas, who
betrayed him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" He replied, "You have said so."

²⁶While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he
broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." ²⁷Then
he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from
it, all of you, ²⁸for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for
many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of
the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

³⁰When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

³¹ Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of me this night, for it is written,

'I will strike the shepherd,

and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'

³² "But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." ³³ Peter said to him, "Even if all fall away because of you, I will never fall away." ³⁴ Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." ³⁵ Peter said to him, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And so said all the disciples.

³⁶ Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee and began to be grieved and agitated. ³⁸ Then he said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." ³⁹ And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me, yet not what I want but what you want." ⁴⁰ Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? ⁴¹ Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." ⁴² Again he went away for the second time and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." ⁴³ Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴ So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. ⁴⁵ Then he came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Now the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Get up, let us be going. Look, my betrayer is at hand."

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. ⁴⁸ Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him." ⁴⁹ At once he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you are here to do." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. ⁵¹ Suddenly one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁵² Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place, for all who take the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³ Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?" ⁵⁵ At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a rebel? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. ⁵⁶ But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

⁵⁷ Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. ⁵⁸ But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end. ⁵⁹ Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, ⁶⁰ but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward ⁶¹ and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.' " ⁶² The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" ⁶³ But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." ⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you,

From now on you will see the Son of Man
seated at the right hand of Power
and coming on the clouds of heaven."

⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. ⁶⁶ What do you think?" They answered, "He deserves death." ⁶⁷ Then they spat in his face and struck him, and some slapped him, ⁶⁸ saying, "Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?"

⁶⁹ Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A female servant came to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." ⁷⁰ But he denied it before all of them, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about."

⁷¹ When he went out to the porch, another female servant saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus the Nazarene." ⁷² Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." ⁷³ After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." ⁷⁴ Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that moment the cock crowed. ⁷⁵ Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

^{27:1} When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. ² They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

³ When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. ⁴ He said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." ⁵ Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself. ⁶ But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money." ⁷ After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners. ⁸ For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. ⁹ Then was fulfilled what had

been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, ¹⁰ and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

¹¹ Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so." ¹² But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. ¹³ Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?" ¹⁴ But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

¹⁵ Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. ¹⁶ At that time they had a notorious prisoner called Jesus Barabbas. ¹⁷ So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" ¹⁸ For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. ¹⁹ While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." ²⁰ Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. ²¹ The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." ²² Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" ²³ Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

²⁴ So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." ²⁵ Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" ²⁶ So he released Barabbas for them, and after flogging Jesus he handed him over to be crucified.

²⁷ Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. ²⁸ They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹ and after twisting some thorns into a crown they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ³⁰ They spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. ³¹ After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

³² As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. ³³ And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), ³⁴ they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. ³⁵ And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting

lots; ³⁶ then they sat down there and kept watch over him. ³⁷ Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

³⁸ Then two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁹ Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." ⁴¹ In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, ⁴² "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. ⁴³ He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to, for he said, 'I am God's Son.' " ⁴⁴ The rebels who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

⁴⁵ From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ⁴⁶ And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ⁴⁷ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." ⁴⁸ At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹ But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." ⁵⁰ Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. ⁵¹ At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. ⁵² The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. ⁵³ After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴ Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

⁵⁵ Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him. ⁵⁶ Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

⁵⁷ When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who also was himself a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸ He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. ⁵⁹ So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth ⁶⁰ and laid it in his new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. ⁶¹ Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

⁶² The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate ⁶³ and said, "Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.'
⁶⁴ Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise, his disciples may go and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has been raised from the dead,' and the last deception would be worse than

the first." ⁶⁵ Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can." ⁶⁶ So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Ryan Radtke

HYMN OF THE DAY- *Christ Is the Life (Words)
Melody

ACS 927
ELW 251

1 Christ is the life of all that is,
God's pure creative Word,
whose pow'r beyond and through
all space
the worlds to Being stirred.
Christ is the life beyond all time,
creation's birth and breath,
whose labor brings all things to be
and brings all things to death.

2 Christ is the death of all that is;
a broad and beck'ning tomb,
who welcomes us from well-worn
ways
to darkness of the womb.
Christ is the death, the sinking down
past all desire and fear,
whose promise in the gentle dark
bids newness to appear.

3 Christ is the death of all that is,
a bright, consuming fire,
whose flames require our prior self
as kindling for the pyre.
Christ is the death of dusty days
of uncreative strife,
for out from fire we tread upon
the threshold of new life.

4 Christ is the life of all that is,
Beginning and the End;
creative force, most peaceful
death,
transforming burning brand.
Christ is the life, in whose wise love
creation lives and dies
and thus forevermore shall bless
the Source, the living Christ.

*CONFESSION

P: Jesus rode into Jerusalem not as a conquering king but in humility, the Servant King, ready to complete the task for which he had walked this world.

C: *Forgive us those times when we think too highly of ourselves and remind us always that you ask from us lives dedicated to service, to you and to our neighbors, wherever and whoever they might be. Enable us to take off our cloaks of self-righteousness and lay them down at your feet.*

P: Laying aside judgment, God offers us redemption; setting aside anger, God embraces us with love; letting go of grief, God pours living water upon us. This is the good news, my friends: God's steadfast love endures forever.

C: *Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is the One who brings us the kingdom of God! Amen.*

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

A: Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

A: O God, you announce words of grace and truth. Give wisdom to all preachers in your church both globally and locally. Open our hearts to encounter the infinite life you offer in Jesus. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You hold the whole universe. Gather sun and moon, clouds and stars, land and sea, and plants and animals around the cross, so that all creation bears witness to your saving love. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Your power is sure. Destroy inequity and division in every place, and build your beloved community among all people. Guide judges, attorneys, and juries so that they act with justice and fairness. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Your heart breaks open at our pain. Send healing and vindication to all who, like Jesus, know the sting of betrayal, denial, abuse, or false accusations. Be with those experiencing pain or loss this day (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Your ways show compassion. Let this same mind be in us as we enter Holy Week. Bless those here who will lead worship and tell the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: O God, your embrace is eternal. Praise and thanks to you for all the faithful departed who rest in your mercy. Deliver us all from death's power and raise us to life in you. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

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 Starrett, Theurer, and Trimble families. Make us your people. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

C: Amen.

***PEACE**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.


OFFERING – Chief of Sinners Though I Be

Choir Anthem

You may place an "I give online" card in the plate as a physical offering

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

ELW 186



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: **God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

(ELW p. 206)

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, whose suffering and death gave salvation to all. You gather your people around the tree of the cross, transforming death into 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:

*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

(ELW p. 207)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,



heav'n 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P: Blessed are you, O God of the universe.

Your mercy is everlasting

and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.

Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.

Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.

Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness
to the land of milk and honey.

Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.

Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.

Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

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.

With this bread and cup
we remember our Lord's passover from death to life
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

P: O God of resurrection and new life:
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Bless this feast.
Grace our table with your presence.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.
Breathe new life into us.
Send us forth,
burning with justice, peace, and love.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

With your holy ones of all times and places,
with the earth and all its creatures,
with sun and moon and stars,
we praise you, O God,
blessed and holy Trinity,
now and forever.

C: Amen.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

(ELW p. 208)

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.*

COMMUNION

COMMUNION SONG – *Lamb of God*

(ELW p. 208)



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

*** 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.

A: God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

***A SHORT LITANY AS HOLY WEEK BEGINS**

A: Today we have cheered you on as our champion and hailed you as our hero.

C: *Forgive us tomorrow when our enthusiasm wanes.*

A: Today we have entrusted you to rescue us from our pitiful circumstances.

C: *Forgive us on Tuesday when we decide we can take care of ourselves.*

A: Today we have made you the centerpiece of our very existence.

C: *Forgive us on Wednesday when we forget to remember who you are.*

A: Today we have called out to you loudly by name.

C: *Forgive us on Thursday when we pretend that we've never met you.*

A: Today we have stared at you with the star struck eyes of fans and groupies.

C: *Forgive us on Friday when we avert our eyes because it's too painful to see you on the cross.*

A: Today we have expressed our unsuppressed hopefulness in the future you have in store for us.

C: *Forgive us on Saturday when we believe all is lost.*

A: Today we have been boldly certain of the earthly ways you will redeem us.

C: *Restore us on Sunday when we are startled and awed by your rising.*

***BLESSING**

P: Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ✠ bless you now and always.

C: Amen



1 My song is love unknown,
my Savior's love to me,
love to the loveless shown
that they might lovely be.
Oh, who am I that for my sake
my Lord should take frail flesh and
die?

2 He came from his blest throne
salvation to bestow;
the world that was his own
would not its Savior know.
But, oh, my friend, my friend indeed,
who at my need his life did spend!

3 Sometimes we strew his way
and his sweet praises sing;
resounding all the day
hosannas to our king.
Then "Crucify!" is all our breath,
and for his death we thirst and cry.

4 We cry out; we will have
our dear Lord made away,
a murderer to save,
the prince of life to slay.
Yet cheerful he to suffering goes
that he his foes from thence might
free.

5 In life no house, no home
my Lord on earth might have;
in death no friendly tomb
but what a stranger gave.
What may I say? Heav'n was his
home
but mine the tomb wherein he lay.

6 Here might I stay and sing--
no story so divine!
Never was love, dear King,
never was grief like thine.
This is my friend, in whose sweet
praise
I all my days could gladly spend!

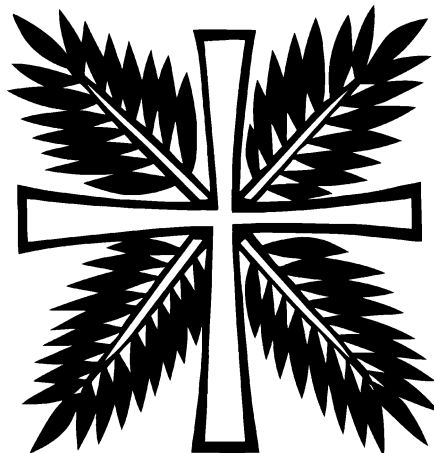
***DISMISSAL**

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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Confession by John Birch, **Faith and Worship** <http://www.faihandworship.com/>
and by Thom Shuman, Lectionary Liturgies blog
Short litany for Holy Week by Rev. Christine Sobania Johnson, Freshly Squeezed Liturgy



WORSHIP ASSISTANTS – Sunday, March 29, 2026

Pianist: Debbie Walker
 Lay Assistants: (1st Lay Asst.) Will Radtke (2nd Lay Asst.) Lois Schroeder
 Lector: Diana Sondor
 Acolyte: Anna Radtke
 Greeter: Marilyn Gunn
 Ushers: Chris Sondor & Gordon Gunn
 Altar Guild: Lois Schroeder & Lorrie Albertson
 Counters: Gordon & Marilyn Gunn
 Live Streamer: Donna Shaw

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MESSIAH

March 29	Christian Formation	9:15 AM
	Worship Service	10:45 AM
	Palm Sunday	
	Quilt Sunday	
March 31	AA	5:30 PM
April 1	PAL Quilt Group	9:00 AM
April 2	Hanover Adult Center	12:00 PM
	All Souls Maundy Thursday Service	5:30 PM
	Messiah Maundy Thursday Service	7:00 PM
April 3	All Souls Good Friday Service	5:30 PM
	Messiah Good Friday Service	7:00 PM
April 5	Easter Breakfast	8:45 AM
	Easter Egg Hunt	9:30 AM
	Worship Service	10:45 AM
April 7	Banner Team	9:15 AM
	AA	5:30 PM
April 8	Women's Bible Study	10:00 AM
	Hanover Adult Center	12:00 PM
	Women's Bible Study	6:30 PM
April 9	Hanover Adult Center	12:00 PM
April 12	Christian Formation	9:15 AM
	Worship Service	10:45 AM
April 14	AA	5:30 PM
April 15	PAL Quilt Group	9:00 AM
April 16	Hanover Adult Center	12:00 PM
	Reports DUE for April Council Meeting	
April 19	Christian Formation	9:15 AM
	Worship Service	10:45 AM
	Manna Sunday	
	Messiah Church Council Meeting (Date Change)	12:00 PM

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Announcements

PASTOR RYAN'S OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Ryan will be in and out of the office this week for all the Holy Week preparations. 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 12th Sunday of 2026:

- Average Contributions to current were \$3,957.67
- Contributions for current March 22nd were \$3,740.00
- The YTD total contribution to current is \$47,492.00
- For comparison, current YTD 2025 was \$51,116.00
- Designated giving for the 12th Sunday was \$46.00

HOLY WEEK DATES AND TIMES

- Maundy Thursday, 7:00 pm
- Good Friday, 7:00 pm
- Vigil of Easter (Holy Saturday) – a take-home devotional packet will be emailed
- Easter Sunday: 8:45 am – Breakfast; 9:45 am – Easter Egg Hunt; 10:45 am - Worship

PRAYER LIST UPDATES

It's time to update our prayer list. If you have news to share about the individuals we've been praying for, whether for ongoing need of intercession or prayers of thanksgiving for improvement, please let Heather or Pastor Ryan know. We will reset the prayer list on April 1st. Thank you all for your continued compassion and care for each other, for our extended family, and for our neighbors.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Women's Bible Study Groups will not meet during the month of March. Meetings will resume in April. If you have questions talk to Nancy Berg, Marilyn Gunn, and Donna Combs.

SACKCLOTH TALK

Thank you to everyone who participated in our "Sackcloth Talks." We learned many things: that we can have conversations around tough topics with respect and love; that we can disagree and still be unified in Christ; that social statements aren't everybody's favorite style of writing; and that we should keep talks like these going. Stay tuned for our next study, starting April 19th, talking about the times Jesus "breaks the rules" (thanks, Brielle!).

SERVICE WEDNESDAY – CLEANING

Spring Cleaning Opportunity for Holy Week, Wednesday, April 1, starting at 1PM. We will concentrate on cleaning and sprucing up the kitchen, fellowship hall and the bathrooms. Bring any cleaning supplies that will help you in the area you choose to work in. Some suggested supplies include Clorox wipes and gloves. Questions? Talk to Cheryl Griffis or Marilyn Gunn.

See you there!

M.O.M.'S BREAKFAST

It's that time of year again, when the Men of Messiah, known affectionately as "M.O.M.," get together to cook for Easter Breakfast. Breakfast will be at 8:45 on Easter Morning. All are invited.

The traditional Easter breakfast is something that we all look forward to. It does, however, take preparation and willing hands to bring it about. Both cooks and servers are needed, with on-the-job training available. There will be a good will offering basket.

If you, Man of Messiah, are willing to lend a hand, contact Bill Weaver at 804-908-3861.

EASTER EGG HUNT IS ON!

As is our tradition, Messiah will hold an Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday morning during the Sunday School Hour. Please bring your children, grandchildren, friends, neighbors to join in the fun.

Please consider donating individually wrapped candy, small prizes and/or your time to help assemble. Contact Anita Philp at 804-347-9528 or anitaphilp1961@gmail.com.

Thanks in Advance!

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The Women's Bible Study is returning to meetings after a brief vacation during Lent. The part of the book we are studying is the story of Rahab in the book A Lineage of Grace. This month we will be reading chapters 5 & 6 (pages 151-168) on Wednesday April 8th and chapter 7 (pages 170 – 180) and the Epilogue on Wednesday April 22. Please join us at 10:30 a.m. or 6:30 p.m. in the church fellowship hall. Everyone is welcome!!! If you have questions, talk to Nancy Berg, Marilyn Gunn, or Donna Combs.

BANNER TEAM

The Banner Team has been working hard on our current banner set and we are very close to being done. We can hardly wait until you see all of them. We meet on Tuesday April 7th and 21st at 1:00 – 3:00 in the church fellowship hall. It is a joy to work on banners for all of you!

