

Sunday, September 14, 2025 14th Sunday of Pentecost



SECOND SUNDAY BECAUSE WE RECEIVE GRACE THROUGH FAITH

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH 1 West Ridge Road, Savannah, GA 31411 (912) 598-1188 www.messiahsi.org WELCOME TO THIS
WORSHIP
CELEBRATION of the
living Christ's presence
in our midst. Christ
comes to us with new
life and strength for
Christian living in
daily life through the
hearing of the Word,
preaching, prayer,
song, and community.

As the Confession and Forgiveness begins, all may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.

Congregational responses are in bold

* Asterisks throughout the order of worship indicate the people standing, in body and/or in spirit.

GATHERING

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Marcia Stinson, Reader

PRELUDE "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" *Shirley Newhart, Organ*

arr. Machemer

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,

you free us to love others,

but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way.

You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace,

but we turn away from the abundant life you offer.

You surround us with patience, kindness, and generosity,

but we grow weary in doing what is right.

In your mercy, forgive us.

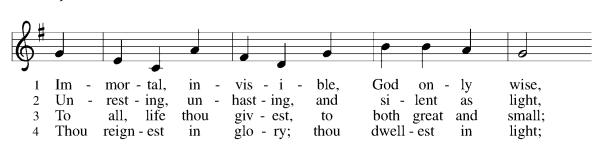
Heal us, break our bonds,

and show us the path of life.

Amen.

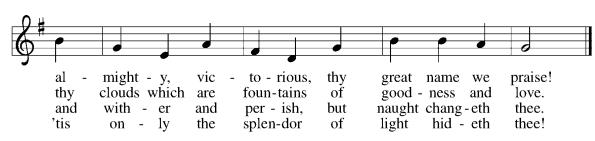
You belong to Christ Jesus and you are God's children through faith. In the cross of 中 Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation.

*GATHERING SONG "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"









Text: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1824–1908, alt. Music: ST. DENIO, Welsh traditional

*GREETING

Amen.

Hymn 834

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.



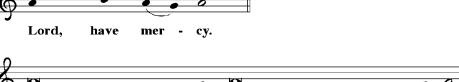
ONLINE GIVING

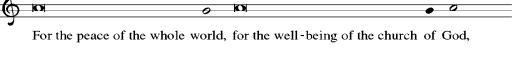
Please consider making a one-time or recurring gift to Messiah using the secure online portal at the website (messiahsi.org) and clicking on the Donate tab. Another option to reach the portal is to scan this QR code using your smartphone's QR reader.

If you would like to give the old-fashioned way, the offering plate is on the table as you exit the Sanctuary. "Kyrie" is a Greek word meaning "Lord."
In Christian liturgy, particularly in Kyrie Eleison, it's used as a plea for God's mercy.
The full phrase, "Kyrie eleison," translates to "Lord, have mercy," and has a common element in various Christian worship services since the 4th century.

*KYRIE



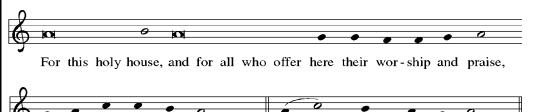








let us pray to





the Lord.

Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

Lord

have

*CANTICLE OF PRAISE



*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Gracious God,

You call us not to earn your love but to trust your promise. By your Spirit, free us from striving for what you have already given—that, justified by faith alone, we may rest in your mercy, walk in your freedom, and live in joyful response to your grace. Through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

ANTHEM "May the Words of My Mouth"

Nix

Chancel Choir

May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be pleasing unto You, O God.

May the works of my hands and the path that I walk be pleasing unto You, O God.

For You are my Redeemer, the Rock of my salvation. I long to bring You honor in all I say and do.

May the songs that I sing and the gifts that I bring be pleasing unto You, O God.

May the life that I live and the ways that I give be pleasing unto You, O God.

The reading of Scripture is when God makes known his will: God desires mercy and salvation.

Ultimately, this word points us to the Word, the incarnate Son of God.

Through Christ — God's only Son — are we able to know the Father's favor and grace.

WORD

Marcia Stinson, Reader

FIRST READING: Genesis 15:1-6

Old Testament 11

"And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness."

¹ After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ² But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." ⁴ But the word of the Lord came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." ⁵ He

brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶ And he believed the Lord, and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 40:1-4

"Happy are those who make the LORD their trust..."

- ¹ I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry.
- ² He drew me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.
- ³ He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.
 Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord.
- ⁴ Happy are those who make the Lord their trust, who do not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after false gods.

SECOND READING: Romans 3:21-28

New Testament 134

"For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law."

²¹ But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed and is attested by the Law and the Prophets, ²² the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, ²³ since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴ they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had

ALTAR FLOWERS

The flowers in the Sanctuary today (both vases) are given by Claire Cornwell-Williams in memory of her parents, Sue & Woodie Cornwell.

ETERNAL CANDLE

The September candle is given by The Ridberg Family with prayers for our nation to find peace.

passed over the sins previously committed; ²⁶ it was to demonstrate at the present time his own righteousness, so that he is righteous and he justifies the one who has the faith of Jesus.

²⁷ Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. Through what kind of law? That of works? No, rather through the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



*GOSPEL: Luke 18:9-14

New Testament 70

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

⁹ He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: ¹⁰ "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went

down to his home justified rather than the other, for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

SERMON "Because We Receive Grace Through Faith"

Reverend Dr. Karen Scheib

*HYMN OF THE DAY "Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us"

Hymn 789



- Sav-ior like a shep-herd lead us;
- 2 We are yours; in love be friend us,
- 3 You have prom-ised to re ceive us,
- 4 Ear ly let us seek your fa vor,

much we need your ten - der care. be the guard-ian of our way; poor and sin - ful though we be; ear - ly let us do your will;



In your pleas-ant pas-tures feed us, keep your flock, from sin de - fend us, you have mer - cy to re - lieve us, bless - ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior,

for our use your fold pre-pare. seek us when we go a - stray grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free. with your love our spir - its fill.



Bless-ed Je-sus. bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we yours. Bless-ed bless-ed Je - sus. hear us chil - dren when we Je-sus. pray. Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you. Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.



Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours. Bless-ed bless-ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we Je - sus, pray. Bless-ed Je - sus. bless-ed Je - sus. ear - lv let turn you. us to Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed Je-sus, you have loved us, love still.

Text: attr. Dorothy A. Thrupp, 1779–1847 Music: BRADBURY, William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868 In the sermon, the Word of God is brought to bear on the lives of the hearers. This is the equivalent of sitting at the feet of Jesus. But it's more than mere instruction.

Through the sermon, God speaks to us with a two-edged sword of challenge and promise, Law and Gospel. The subject of the sermon is both God and us.

Through the sermon we come to a better understanding of ourselves, especially our need for God's love and forgiveness. We also come face to face with God's mercy and love.

In the Apostles' Creed,
the phrase "holy
catholic Church" refers
to the universal
Christian church, not
exclusively the Roman
Catholic Church. It
signifies the belief in a
single, unified body of
believers across time
and space, united by
their shared faith in
Christ.

*APOSTLES' 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.

TEMPLE TALK "Every Child Deserves a Bed to Sleep In" Lisa Oswald, Outreach Ministry

*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

(In between the petitions of the prayers, the following response is offered.)

Leader: God of Grace,

People: Receive our prayers.

(Final petition and response.)

Leader: We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend.

People: Amen.

*LORD'S PRAYER

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.

SENDING

*PASTORAL BENEDICTION

The love of God abound in you; the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ fill your hearts; and the life of the Spirit → bless you and give you peace.

Amen.

The final blessing is a declaration of God's grace and peace upon the congregation as they depart the service. It's not a prayer or request but a pronouncement of God's blessing, echoing the Aaronic blessing from the Old *Testament in the book* of Numbers chapter 6. This blessing assures the congregation that God's presence and favor will accompany them as they go out into the world.

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*SENDING SONG "Praise the Lord, Rise Up Rejoicing"

Hymn 544



Text: Howard C. A. Gaunt, 1902–1983, alt.
Music: ALLES IST AN GOTTES SEGEN, Johann Löhner, 1645–1705, adapt.
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*DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*POSTLUDE "Hornpipe from Water Music" Shirley Newhart, organ

Handel



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

| Sunday, September 14 | 9:00 am Worship | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| | 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship | | |
| | 10:20 am Adult Discipleship Class | | |
| | 10:20 am Confirmation Class | | |
| Monday, September 15 | 10:00 am Women's Bible Study | | |
| Tuesday, September 16 | 2:00 pm Outreach Ministry | | |
| Wednesday, September 17 | 8:30 am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study | | |
| | 10:00 am PLARNing Group | | |
| | 7:00 Choir Practice | | |
| Thursday, September 18 | 3:00 pm Skidaway Abigails | | |
| | 4:00 pm Theology 101 | | |
| | 6:30 pm Q&A for a Geriatric Doctor | | |
| Friday, September 19 | | | |
| Saturday, September 20 | | | |

Italics indicate outside group



THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

Ministers The People of Messiah

Pastor Jason Talsness

Minister, Pastoral Care Karen Scheib

Pastor Emeritus James Peper

Presiding Bishop ELCA Elizabeth A. Eaton

Bishop, SE Synod ELCA Kevin Strickland

Director of Music & Organist Shirley Newhart

Choral Director Rodney Powers

Altar Guild Kathy Ritz and Marcia Stinson

Reader Marcia Stinson

Evangelism Greeters Barbara Johnson and Bonnie LaPread

Ushers Parker Pearson and Kathy Ritz

Acolytes Confirmation Class

Audio Visual Steve Allen and Ken McLauchlan

Coffee Hour Christine Lind (host), Cheryl Liebgott

(cake) and Marcia Stinson (treats)

MILESTONES THIS WEEK

Birthdays: Claire Cornwell-Williams 09/14, Steve Walker 09/18, Steve Allen 09/19, Jody Voss 09/19

Anniversaries: Joy & Tom Olson 09/18, Barbara Van Doren & Tim Andrews 09/19

ANNOUNCEMENTS

IT'S BIRTHDAY SUNDAY

Join us today to celebrate folks with September birthdays during Coffee Fellowship after Worship.

PARISH LIFE MINISTRY Questions & Answers for a Geriatric Doctor

Thursday, September 18, 6:30 pm

Geriatric specialist Dr. Judy Hildebrand will lead a Question & Answer event. This is the second of five sessions sponsored by the Parish Life Ministry. The group will meet in Fellowship Hall. Please sign up on the Narthex Kiosk to aid planners.

Sunset Cruise Friday, October 17, 4:45 pm

This churchwide event will leave from Landings Harbor (north harbor on Marina Drive). BYOB and an appetizer to share is optional. The cost is \$35 per person with a maximum of 34 people. Questions? Contact Gayle Denny (503.604.0764)

Women's Retreat May 15-17, 2026 Epworth-by-the Sea, St. Simons Island

Planning is underway for the next retreat, and Karen Scheib will lead the sessions focused on the theme "Our Story and God's Story." Messiah's folks get so busy that the Parish Life Ministry is challenging the women of the church to create time for themselves at this special Women's Retreat. Early planning is necessary to secure conference center space and get on people's calendar.

There is a \$50 deposit due by Sunday, September 14, to help plan and secure numbers. The total cost will be \$300 for each shared hotellike room with 2 queen beds and a balcony overlooking the river. (\$430 for a single room.) The cost covers 2 nights' lodging and 6 meals.

Parish Life Ministry Chair Gayle Denny hopes to get sponsorship for 1/3 of the total cost for the retreat. The registration form is on the Narthex Kiosk. Please write a check to Messiah Lutheran Church for \$50 (with Women's Retreat in the memo line) and submit it by September 14 with a completed copy of the registration form to the Church Office or place it in the Sunday offering plate. Need more information? Contact Parish Life Chair Gayle Denny (513.604.0764).

OUTREACH MINISTRY Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia

Peanut butter is the food for September.

Brats, Band & Building Beds A Celebration of Music, Food & Giving Saturday, September 27, from 5:00 to 8:00 pm

Plan to attend this fun-filled evening of great music, delicious food, and a powerful purpose—helping children get the beds they deserve. The event will be in the church parking lot, and there will be:

- Live music by the Bourbon Boys
- Brats and hot dogs fresh off the grill with sides, all courtesy of Messiah
- Leopold's ice cream for purchase
- Bring a chair and your drinks.

All proceeds will go directly to Sleep in Heavenly Peace, a nonprofit that builds beds for children in need. *Because every child deserves a bed to sleep in*. Can't make it? Consider donating or joining the event to build the beds on Saturday, October 25th. Guerry Lumber is a sponsor of the event.

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP Beginning Friday, September 26 at 3:30 pm

Have you lost a loved one recently? Join the Grief Support Group to come to a deeper understanding of grief, share experiences, and become companions on the journey towards healing. The group, which is open to anyone in the community, is for a maximum of 10 adults who have lost someone in a significant relationship.

The course will be held at Thrive and will run for eleven weeks on Fridays, from 3:30 to 5 pm, on September 26 to November 21 and December 5 and 12. The cost is \$20, which pays for the course materials. To register, contact Pastor Scheib (kdsspin54@gmail.com; 404.401.0219) or contact the Church Office.

KAIROS PRISON MINISTRY Please Help!

On October 2nd, the Kairos Prison Ministry Team will return to Emanuel Women's Facility in Swainsboro, Georgia. Kairos means "God's Special Time." The purpose of this program is to establish a Kairos Community inside this prison by the transforming love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ. A Kairos Team of 22 Kairos volunteers will spend 3½ days with the residents sharing God's love for them.

How to Participate

- **Pray for us:** Be a part of the Prayer Chain. This is vital...without prayer this weekend cannot happen. There will be a sign-up sheet and suggested prayers on the Kairos Table in the Fellowship Hall for the next four Sundays.
- Donate: All Kairos activities are funded by donations. One way to help is to buy meal tickets for the participants. A \$5 donation is suggested, but any amount will be helpful. The residents will see that someone they did not know was thinking about them and paid for their meal.
- Color Placemats: These placemats are used for each meal to brighten their mealtime during the weekend. The residents are thrilled to see that someone has taken the time to brighten their day.

Please stop by the table in the Fellowship Hall after worship and participate in this worthwhile mission. You may also contact Pat Cooper at 912-508-4250. God Bless

MESSIAH READS Tuesday, September 23, 6:30 pm

The next meeting will be a Patti Small's home at 5 Oak Shadow Court in Deer Creek. The group will discuss *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi.

A list of suggested books was emailed to everyone who signed up for the book group. If you have not already, please send your top 10 choices to Patti Small. If you did not receive the email, let Patti know.

If you have questions or need more information, contact Patti Small (smallpatricia13@yahoo.com) or Lisa Oswald (laoswald@icloud.com).

HOPE HAS MANY VOICES: Benefit Concert for JUST Sunday, September 21, 5:00-6:30 PM

JUST is offering a concert with prominent and gifted artists who are donating their talents for a night with an array of musical genres, including gospel, jazz, pop, rock, and Broadway. The evening is designed to appeal to audiences with a wide array of musical tastes.

The event will be at Savannah's First Baptist Church at 223 Bull Street and will benefit JUST—a coalition of Savannah faith communities advocating for access to mental health care, affordable housing, and reading education in the public schools. Messiah supports JUST.

Tickets are just \$25 and can be purchased at the door or in advance at justsav.org/events.

SERMON PREVIEW

Because We Receive Grace Through Faith

Faith is the focus of the second week of our series on "Why Lutheran?" Luther recovered the Apostle Paul's emphasis on "justification through grace by faith." (Romans 3:21-28) We are "justified" – set right with God by grace alone through faith alone. Faith is not an achievement but the appropriate response of trust and acceptance of God's unconditional acceptance of us. This affirmation became a central principle of the Reformation. While the world judges us on our achievements, efforts, and good deeds, God's way is different. God's unmerited grace frees us from striving and reshapes our relationship to God. We will explore this theme through the Parable of the Pharisee and tax collector in Luke 18:9-14. One boasts of his own righteousness, the other throws himself on God's mercy. Questions for Reflection: What are some of the ways you feel pushed to prove yourself as good or worthy? Have you ever felt you had to earn God's grace? How does complete trust in God free us?

CHURCH COUNCIL 2025

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*Milda Blaney is serving the first year of a three-year term that ends in 2027.

