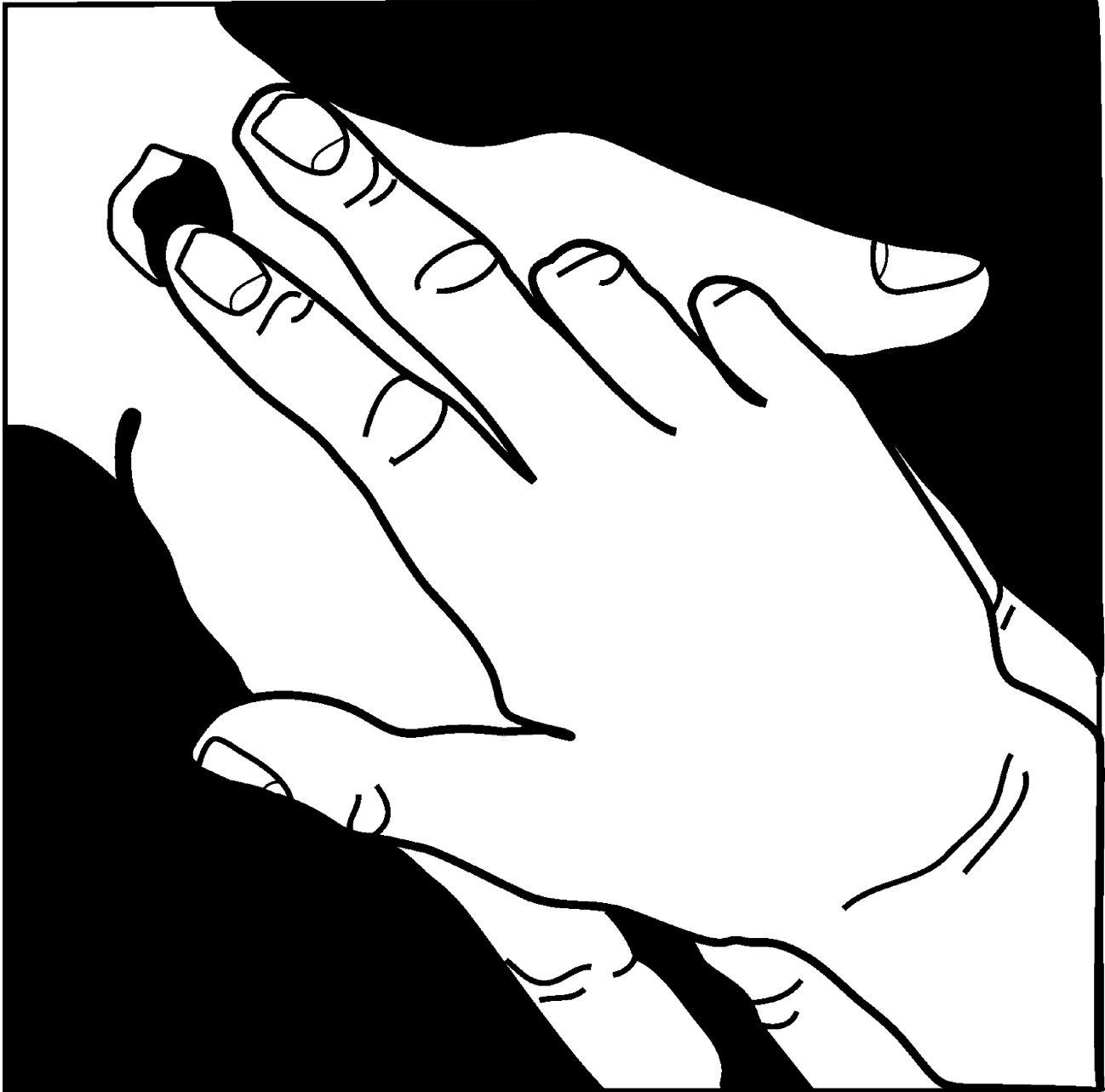


# MESSIAH LUTHERAN

*Seaside*

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

**Sunday, April 12, 2026**  
**Second Sunday of Easter**



MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH  
1 West Ridge Road, Savannah, GA 31411  
(912) 598-1188  
[www.messiahsi.org](http://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 re-  
sponses are in bold*

*\* Asterisks through-  
out the order of  
worship indicate  
the people stand-  
ing, in body and/or  
in spirit.*

# GATHERING

## CHIMING OF THE HOUR

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Lynnetta Hartson*

## PRELUDE "Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven"

*Shirley Newhart, organ*

arr. Hobby

## \*CONFESSON AND FORGIVENESS

Leader: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
the fountain of living water,  
the rock who gave us birth,  
our light and our salvation.

**People: Amen.**

Leader: Let us come into the light,  
the revealing and healing light of God.

Leader: God of grace and glory,

**People: you have brought us through the night of sin  
into the light of Jesus' resurrection.  
Yet our lives are still shadowed by sin.  
Make us alive in Christ, O God.  
Make us new as you make all things new.  
Rescue us from evil and the gloom of sin,  
renew us in grace,  
and restore us to living in your holiness,  
through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.  
Amen.**

Leader: Rejoice with all creation around God's throne!  
 The light of the risen Christ  
 puts to flight all evil deeds, washes away sin,  
 restores innocence to the fallen,  
 casts out hate, brings peace,  
 and humbles earthly pride.  
 Jesus Christ loves you  
 and † frees you from your sins by his blood.  
 To him be glory and dominion forever and ever!

People: Amen.

**\*GATHERING SONG** "That Easter Day with Joy was Bright"

Hymn 384



1 That Eas - ter day with joy was bright; the  
 2 O Je - sus, king of gen - tle - ness, with  
 3 O Christ, you are the Lord of all in  
 4 All praise, O ris - en Lord, we give to



sun shone out with fair - er light when, to their long - ing  
 con - stant love our hearts pos - sess; to you our lips will  
 this our Eas - ter fes - ti - val, for you will be our  
 you, once dead, but now a - live! To God the Fa - ther



eyes re - stored, the a - pos - tles saw their ris - en Lord!  
 ev - er raise the trib - ute of our grate - ful praise.  
 strength and shield from ev - 'ry weap - on death can wield.  
 e - qual praise, and God the Spir - it, now we raise!

Text: Latin hymn, 5th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.  
 Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571–1621

**\*GREETING**

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

People: And also with you.

*Easter is the demon-  
 stration of God that  
 life is essentially spir-  
 itual and timeless.*

—Charles M. Crowe



# \*CANTICLE OF PRAISE

*Refrain*

Assisting minister



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.

All



1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.

*Refrain*



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

*Final refrain*



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



## \*PRAYER OF THE DAY

**Leader:** Almighty and eternal God, the strength of those who believe and the hope of those who doubt, may we, who have not seen, have faith in you and receive the fullness of Christ's blessing, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People:** Amen.

## ANTHEM "All Things New"

Hagenberg

*Claire Sampson-Fields, solo*

*Light after darkness, gain after loss, strength after weakness, crown after cross;  
Sweet after bitter, hope after fears, home after wandering, praise after tears.  
Alpha and Omega, beginning and the end, He is making all things new.*

## WORD

*Lynnetta Hartson, Reader*

### FIRST READING: Acts 2:14a, 22-32

*New Testament 103*

*After the Holy Spirit comes to the apostles on Pentecost, Peter preaches the gospel to the gathered crowd. He tells them that Jesus, who obediently went to his death according to God's plan, was raised from the dead by God.*

*Finally, he appeals to scripture, quoting Psalm 16:8-11, to show that Jesus is the Messiah: though crucified, the risen Jesus is now enthroned.*

<sup>14a</sup> Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed [the crowd]: <sup>22</sup> "Fellow Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know <sup>23</sup> this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. <sup>24</sup> But God raised him up, having released him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. <sup>25</sup> For David says concerning him,

*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*

'I saw the Lord always before me,  
for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken;  
<sup>26</sup> therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;  
moreover, my flesh will live in hope.  
<sup>27</sup> For you will not abandon my soul to Hades  
or let your Holy One experience corruption.  
<sup>28</sup> You have made known to me the ways of life;  
you will make me full of gladness with your presence.'  
<sup>29</sup> "Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David  
that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this  
day. <sup>30</sup> Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath  
to him that he would put one of his descendants on his  
throne. <sup>31</sup> Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah,  
saying,  
'He was not abandoned to Hades,  
nor did his flesh experience corruption.'  
<sup>32</sup> "This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses."

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## **PSALMODY: Psalm 16**

*In your presence there is fullness of joy. (Ps. 16:11)*

Leader: <sup>1</sup> Protect me, O God, for I take refuge in you;  
I have said to the Lord, "You are my Lord, my good  
above all other."

**People: <sup>2</sup> All my delight is in the godly that are in the land,  
upon those who are noble among the people.**

Leader: <sup>3</sup> But those who run after other gods  
shall have their troubles multiplied.

**People: <sup>4</sup> I will not pour out drink offerings to such gods,  
never take their names upon my lips.**

Leader: <sup>5</sup> O Lord, you are my portion and my cup;  
it is you who uphold my lot.

**People: <sup>6</sup> My boundaries enclose a pleasant land;  
indeed, I have a rich inheritance.**

Leader: <sup>7</sup> I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel;  
my heart teaches me night after night.

**People:** <sup>8</sup> I have set the Lord always before me;  
because God is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.

**Leader:** <sup>9</sup> My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spirit rejoices;  
my body also shall rest in hope.

**People** <sup>10</sup> For you will not abandon me to the grave,  
nor let your holy one see the pit.

**Leader:** <sup>11</sup> You will show me the path of life;  
in your presence there is fullness of joy,  
and in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

## **SECOND READING: 1 Peter 1:3-9**

*New Testament 205*

*This epistle was written to encourage Christians experiencing hardships and suffering because of their faith in Christ. The letter opens by blessing God for the living hope we have through Christ's resurrection even amid difficult circumstances and surroundings.*

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead <sup>4</sup> and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup> In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, <sup>7</sup> so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. <sup>8</sup> Although you have not seen him, you love him, and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, <sup>9</sup> for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

### **\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



## \*GOSPEL: John 20:19-31

*New Testament 100*

*The risen Jesus appears to his disciples, offering them a benediction, a commission, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. But one of their number is missing, and his unbelief prompts another visit from the Lord.*

The Holy Gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>19</sup> When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." <sup>22</sup> When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

<sup>24</sup> But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

<sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." <sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" <sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Both vases of *Altar Flowers* are given today by *Pat Cooper* in honor of the *Kairos Prison Ministry Weekend*.

*April's Eternal Candle* is given by *Dawn Meade* "in loving memory of her dad *John Schaffner*."

## SERMON

*Ken Ritz, Director, Faith Formation*

### \*HYMN OF THE DAY "Alleluia! Jesus is Risen!"

*Hymn 377*

*Verses 1-4*



1 Al - le - lu - ia! Je - sus is ris - en!  
2 Walk - ing the way, Christ in the cen - ter  
3 Je - sus the vine, we are the branch - es;  
4 Weep - ing, be gone; sor - row, be si - lent:  
5 Cit - y of God, Eas - ter for - ev - er,



Trum - pets re - sound - ing in glo - ri - ous light!  
tell - ing the sto - ry to o - pen our eyes;  
life in the Spir - it the fruit of the tree;  
death put a - sun - der, and Eas - ter is bright.  
gold - en Je - ru - sa - lem, Je - sus the Lamb,



Splen - dor, the Lamb, heav - en for - ev - er!  
break - ing our bread, giv - ing us glo - ry:  
heav - en to earth, Christ to the peo - ple,  
Cher - u - bim sing: O grave, be o - pen!  
riv - er of life, saints and arch - an - gels,



Oh, what a mir - a - cle God has in sight!  
Je - sus our bless - ing, our con - stant sur - prise.  
gift of the fu - ture now flow - ing to me.  
Clothe us in won - der, a - dorn us in light.  
sing with cre - a - tion to God the I AM!

*Refrain*



Je - sus is ris - en and we shall a - rise.



Give God the glo - ry! Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: Herbert F. Brokering, b. 1926  
Music: David N. Johnson, 1922-1987  
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Music © 1969 *Contemporary Worship 1*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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## \*NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*Lutherans typically use the Nicene Creed at Easter because it is the church's most fully developed confession of Christ's resurrection and divinity, shaped precisely to address questions about who Jesus is. On a festival as central as Easter, it emphasizes that the risen Christ is "true God from true God," not just raised, but eternally one with the Father.*

*The Nicene Creed comes from the early church councils of First Council of Nicaea and First Council of Constantinople in 325 AD, where bishops clarified Christian teaching about Christ's nature in response to controversy. It is longer and more doctrinally precise.*

## \*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

Leader: Merciful God,

People: **Receive our prayer.**

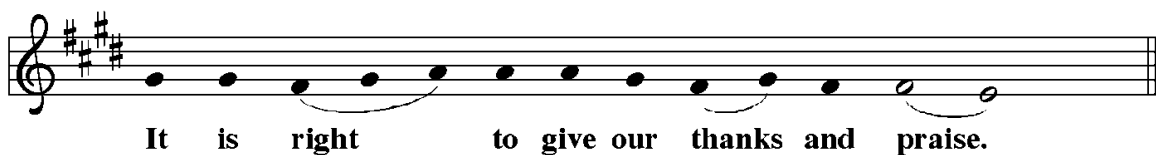
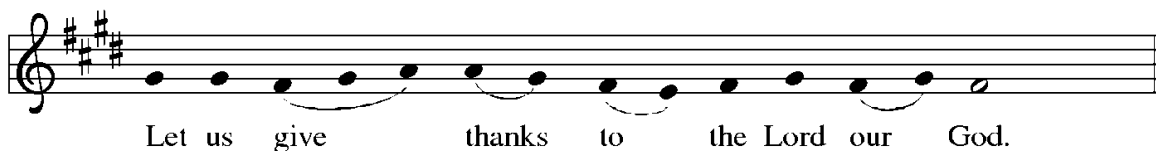
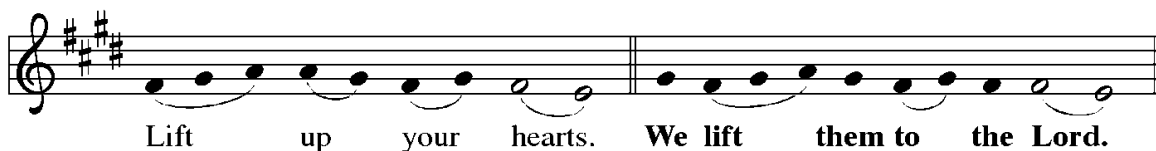
*(Final petition and response.)*

Leader: God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers  
to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world,  
through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

People: **Amen.**

## MEAL

### \*DIALOGUE



### \*PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, ...

We praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## \*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r 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.

## \*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

### \*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.

### \*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the table of grace. Receive the gift of new life.

## COMMUNION SONG "Lamb of God"



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.

## COMMUNION

### \*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Leader: Holy One,

People: **through this meal you have made your home among us  
and are making all things new.**

**Send us as bearers of your peace and healing.**

**Amen.**

## SENDING

### \*PASTORAL BLESSING

Leader: God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end,  
Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead,  
and the Spirit, our advocate and peace,  
✠ bless you now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

# \*SENDING SONG "Hallelujah! Jesus Lives!"

Hymn 380

Verses 1-4



1 Hal-le - lu - jah! Je - sus lives! He is now the Liv - ing One;  
2 Je - sus lives! Why do you weep? Why that sad and mourn - ful sigh?  
3 Je - sus lives! And thus, my soul, life e - ter - nal waits for you;  
4 Je - sus lives! Let all re - joice. Praise him, ran - somed of the earth.  
5 Hal-le - lu - jah! An - gels, sing! Join with us in hymns of praise.



from the gloom - y halls of death Christ, the con - quer - or, has gone,  
Christ who died our broth - er here lives our broth - er still on high,  
joined to Christ, your liv - ing head, where he is, you shall be too;  
Praise him in a no - bler song, cher - u - bim of heav'n - ly birth.  
Let your cho - rus swell the strain which our fee - bler voic - es raise:



bright fore - run - ner to the skies of his peo - ple, yet to rise.  
lives for - ev - er to be - stow bless - ings on his church be - low.  
with the Lord, at God's right hand, as a vic - tor you shall stand.  
Praise the vic - tor king, whose sway sin and death and hell o - bey.  
Glo - ry to our God a - bove and on earth his peace and love!

Text: Carl B. Garve, 1763–1841; tr. Jane L. Borthwick, 1813–1897, alt.  
Music: FRED TIL BOD, Ludvig M. Lindeman, 1812–1887

## \*DISMISSAL

Leader: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

## \*POSTLUDE "Ode to Joy"

Shirley Newhart, organ

arr. Hopson

### PERMISSIONS

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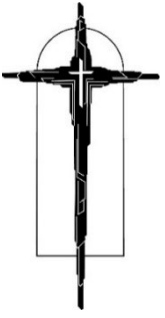
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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday, April 12	9:00 am Worship 10:20 Adult Discipleship Class 10:20 am Confirmation Class
Monday, April 13	10:00 am Women's Bible Study
Tuesday, April 14	3:00 pm Stephen Minister
Wednesday, April 15	8:30 am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 7:00 pm Choir Practice
Thursday, April 16	4:30 pm Study Group
Friday, April 17	<i>10:00 am Stamp Club</i> 5:30 pm Johnson-Liu Rehearsal
Saturday, April 18	

*Italics indicate outside group*

## MESSIAH OFFICE HOURS

*Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday-9:00 am to 4:00 pm*

*Closed for lunch from 12:00 to 1:00 pm*

*Wednesday-8:30 am to 11:30 am*

*Friday-Closed*

## ONLINE GIVING

Please consider making a one-time or recurring gift to Messiah using the secure online portal at the website ([messiahsi.org](http://messiahsi.org)) and clicking on the Give tab. Another option to reach the portal is to scan this QR code using your smartphone's QR reader. This link may be used for paying for altar flowers and other church-related activities. Questions? Contact the Church Office.



If you would like to give the old-fashioned way, the offering plate is on the table as you exit the Sanctuary.



# THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

Ministers	The People of Messiah
Pastor	Jason Talsness
Pastor, Congregational Care	Karen Scheib
Director, Faith Formation	Ken Ritz
Pastor Emeritus	James Peper
Presiding Bishop ELCA	Yehiel Curry
Bishop, SE Synod ELCA	Kevin Strickland
Director of Music & Organist	Shirley Newhart
Choral Director	Rodney Powers
Altar Guild	Lisa Oswald
Reader	Lynnetta Hartson
Evangelism Greeters	Janet Reardon and Kay Ybalecki
Ushers	Ken Mitchell and Jim Ross
Acolytes	Confirmation Class
Communion Assistants	Bonnie LaPread, Randi VenHuizen & Brad VenHuizen
Audio Visual	Steve Allen and Ken McLauchlan
Coffee Hour	Christine Lind (coffee) and Cheryl Liebgott (cake)

## MILESTONES THIS WEEK

*Birthdays: Dr. Geoff Wilson 04/12, John Denny 04/12, Gayla Webb 04/12,  
Gayle Denny 04/14, Jim Dawson 04/18, Barbara Moore 04/18*

*Anniversaries: Barbara Moore & Glynn Morris 04/16*

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **BIRTHDAY SUNDAY**

Be sure to attend Coffee Fellowship following worship today—we will be celebrating those of you with April birthdays.

## **WOMEN'S RETREAT-FINAL PLANS**

**May 15-17, 2026**

### **Epworth-by-the Sea, St. Simons Island**

Karen Scheib will lead the sessions focused on the theme “Our Story and God’s Story,” which will feature examination of participants’ own life stories and how God’s story intersects with their stories. There will be creative exercises, written reflections, small group discussions, and crafts. The retreat will also include free time to explore the Center and the island. The Parish Life Ministry will provide \$50 per person to help defray the cost. This means that the total cost will be \$250 per person for each shared hotel-like room with 2 queen beds and a balcony overlooking the river. Price includes 6 meals. Cost of a private room is \$380 for the 2 nights.

**If you submitted a deposit, the balance is due no later than Sunday, April 20, 2026.** That is \$200 for a shared room and \$330 for a private room. You can pay the balance by writing a check and note Women’s Retreat on memo line. You can also pay by credit card online at Messiah’s website (messiahsi.org). If you want to pay online, contact Sandy Cooper in the Church Office (912.598.1188; messiahsk@gmail.com) for details.

Need more information? Want to sign up now? There are registration forms on the Narthex Kiosk are due April 20. Have questions?

Contact Parish Life Chair Gayle Denny (513.604.0764).

## **KAIROS PRISON MINISTRY**

### **Please Help**

On April 16-19, a team of 26 Kairos volunteers 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. This Kairos Team will spend 3 ½ days with the residents sharing God’s love for them.

### **Here Is How You Can 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 Peper Hall to participate in this worthwhile mission. You may also contact Pat Cooper (912.508.4250).

**COME ONE, COME ALL**  
**2026-27 Fellowship Dinners**  
**Deadline: Sunday April 27**

It's that time of year again—time to sign up for Messiah's Fellowship Dinners for the coming year. They are open to anyone, singles or couples, and are a great way to meet new members, to renew friendships, and to enjoy each other's company in member homes. Groups of six to eight people meet three or four times over the year. Each person/couple hosts one time, providing the main course and beverages. For the other gatherings, they alternate providing an appetizer, salad, or dessert.

Sign up now on the Narthex Kiosk by April 27. Group assignments will be made by early May. Need more information? Contact Lana Gilster (952.250.7510; lanagilster@earthlink.net) or Layne Rabold (912.598.9313; [lalayne@yahoo.net](mailto:lalayne@yahoo.net)).

**SPECIAL PERFORMANCE**  
**Sunday, April 19, 5 pm**

Oskar Johnson-Liu will present a sophomore cello recital Sunday, April 19, at 5pm in Messiah's Sanctuary. He will perform the Haydn Cello Concerto in D Major and the Brahms Cello Sonata in e minor. He will be accompanied by Dr. Gerald Anderson, former piano faculty of Olivet Nazarene University in Kankakee, Illinois. Oskar is so grateful for the kindness and support the Messiah congregation gives him as he continues his cello performing!

**OUTREACH MINISTRY**

Do you have photos from last October's Sleep in Heavenly Peace Bed Build? If you do, please contact Outreach Ministry Chair Lisa Oswald (laoswald@icloud.com). And save the date for this year's event--Saturday, October 3!

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL UPDATE**  
**July 6-10, 2026**

Planning is underway for this summer's Vacation Bible School (VBS), and registration is open on Messiah's website (messiahsi.org). The theme is *Kingdom Quest*. Planners still need help for the team leaders.

The two newest leaders will head up the Décor Team—Penny LeBlanc and Debra Coon will be executing the design plans during May and early June. If you are willing to help with painting, wrapping, cutting and gluing, this is the VBS volunteer role for you. It takes a congregation to make VBS happen! For more information or to volunteer, contact Peggy Pearson (443.995.1146).

**FROM THE PARISH LIFE MINISTRY**

The Hospitality Team from Parish Life requests that people not buy any more plastic glasses for the church. They have a gracious plenty already!

# MESSIAH HAS A NEW TELEPHONE SYSTEM

On Friday, March 27, Messiah went live with a new, modern telephone system. You can now reach the entire staff by dialing 912.598.1188. The lovely artificial intelligence voice will give you options for dialing Pastor Talsness, the Church Office, Dr. Scheib, Ken Ritz, Shirley Newhart, or Rodney Powers. They will each be reachable via an app on their telephone. In the office, Pastor Talsness and Sandy Cooper have the option of using the traditional handset on their desk or an application on their desktop computers as well as an app on their telephone. You can also dial three of the staff directly at these numbers: Pastor Talsness (912.556.8056). Rev. Karen Scheib (912.556.8394) or the Church Office (912.556.8208).

## SERMON PREVIEW

This sermon explores the story of Doubting Thomas as a powerful reminder that faith often grows through honest questions and personal struggle. God not only understands our doubts but uses difficult circumstances and challenges to strengthen our faith.

### Additional Scripture References

John 11:16, 14:5

James 1:3 (NIV)

*The testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete...*

Job 7:17-18 (NIV)

*What is mankind that you make so much of them, that you give them so much attention, that you examine them every morning and test them every moment.*

1 Peter 1:6-7 (ESV)

*...you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor...*

James 1:3-4 (NIV)

*Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.*

Deuteronomy 8:2 (NIV)

*Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart.*

# APRIL SPIRITUAL GROWTH ACTIVITY

## Twelve Monthly Activities for Spiritual Growth

Director of Faith Formation Ken Ritz is inviting our whole church family to participate in a 12-month spiritual growth journey. Each month we'll focus on one simple, but meaningful activity designed to help you draw closer to Christ. Here's the activity for April:

### April—Nature Walk with Scripture Meditation (1 hour)

Find a peaceful place to walk through nature (if you cannot walk for an extended period then find somewhere you can sit, surrounded by nature). Read Psalm 104 aloud before the walk begins. Ask God to speak through both Scripture and creation.

Walk much slower than normal. This is not exercise, it is prayer in motion. As you walk, try to notice:

- something beautiful that reflects God's creativity,
- something small or overlooked that reveals His care,
- something enduring that speaks of His faithfulness.

Express your thanks to God as you notice these things.

Stop once or twice during the walk. Re-read the Scripture silently and ask:

- What does this reveal about God?
- What does this awaken in me—trust, humility, peace?

Invite God to speak personally to you. Ask Him:

- What are you inviting me to release or receive?
- What truth from Scripture do I need to carry back into daily life?

End the walk with a brief spoken prayer or the Lord's Prayer, thanking God for His Word, His creation, and His presence.

*This practice helps slow the pace of life and opens your heart to worship.*

# CHURCH COUNCIL 2026

**Jason Talsness, Pastor**

770.570.7407

[skidawaypastorj@gmail.com](mailto:skidawaypastorj@gmail.com)

**Randi VenHuizen (2028)**

**Vice President**

Education & Discipleship Ministry

402.216.3067

[Randiv1026@gmail.com](mailto:Randiv1026@gmail.com)

**Claire Cornwell-Williams (2028)**

**President**

Evangelism Ministry

912.658.4114

[cwilliams17@comcast.net](mailto:cwilliams17@comcast.net)

Vacant

Finance Ministry

**Lisa Oswald (2026)**

**Secretary**

Outreach Ministry

203.554.5845

[laoswald@icloud.com](mailto:laoswald@icloud.com)

**Gayle Denny (2026)**

Parish Life Ministry

513.604.0764

[gdgardener@comcast.net](mailto:gdgardener@comcast.net)

**Rick Tallon (2028)**

Property Ministry

417.294.2002

[rick.tallon@gmail.com](mailto:rick.tallon@gmail.com)

**Greg Stinson (2026/2027)<sup>1</sup>**

Staff Support/Mutual Ministry

912.704.4084

[gtstinson@comcast.net](mailto:gtstinson@comcast.net)

**George Lawrence (2026/2028)<sup>2</sup>**

Stewardship Ministry

912.484.2818

[mppgg13@gmail.com](mailto:mppgg13@gmail.com)

**Parker Pearson (no term)**

**Treasurer**

410.349.7704

[parkpear@aol.com](mailto:parkpear@aol.com)

**Pat Cooper (2027)**

Worship & Music Ministry

912.508.4250

[cooperpat5@gmail.com](mailto:cooperpat5@gmail.com)

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<sup>1</sup> Greg Stinson is serving the second year of a three-year term that ends in 2027.

<sup>2</sup> George Lawrence is serving the first year of a three-year term that ends in 2028.



IN THE NAME of JESUS  
MESSIAH LUTHERAN

*Welcome*  
*Grow*  
*Support*  
*Serve*