

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

Dick Munson, Reader

PRELUDE "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

arr. Sherman

Skidaway Island Voices in Bronze

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: ADVENT 3

Leader: We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's
advent.

As we light the candles on this wreath,
strengthen our hearts
as we await the Lord's coming in glory.
Enlighten us with your grace,
that we may serve our neighbors in need.
Grant this through Christ our Lord,
whose coming is certain and whose day draws
near.

People: **Amen.**

Light three candles.

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at
baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

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

People: **Amen.**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Leader: Long expected God,

People: we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide.

**We cling to old habits and harmful patterns,
reluctant to let go of the familiar ways that divide and do harm.**

**We grow impatient in the waiting
and weary of keeping watch.**

**Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony
with our neighbors.**

**Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.**

Amen.

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

People: Amen.

*GATHERING SONG "Hail to the Lord's Anointed"

Hymn 311



1 Hail to the Lord's a - noint - ed, great Da - vid's great - er Son!
2 You come with res - cue speed - y to those who suf - fer wrong,
3 You shall come down like show - ers up - on the fruit - ful earth;
4 Kings shall fall down be - fore you, and gold and in - cense bring;



Hail, in the time ap - point - ed, your reign on earth be - gun!
to help the poor and need - y, and bid the weak be strong;
love, joy, and hope, like flow - ers, spring in your path to birth.
all na - tions shall a - dore you, your praise all peo - ple sing.



You come to break op - pres - sion, to set the cap - tive
to give them songs for sigh - ing, their dark - ness turn to
Be - fore you on the moun - tains shall peace, the her - ald,
To you shall prayer un - ceas - ing and dai - ly vows as -



free, to take a - way trans - gres - sion and
light, whose souls, con - demned and dy - ing, are
go; and righ - teous - ness in foun - tains from
cend; your king - dom still in - creas - ing, a



rule in eq - ui - ty.
pre - cious in your sight.
hill to val - ley flow.
king - dom with out end.

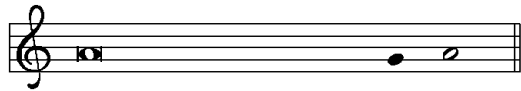
Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt.
Music: FREUT EUCH, IHR LIEBEN, Leonhart Schröter, 1540–1602

*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.

*KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



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



Lord, have mer - cy.



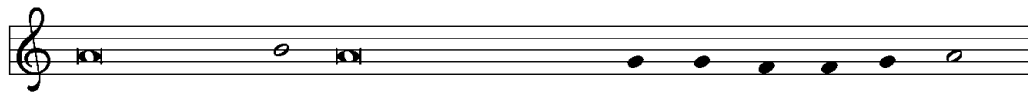
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mer - cy.



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

"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.

What happened to the "Canticle of Praise?" During the season of Advent, the church adopts a more reflective and hopeful tone as we wait for Christ's coming. To honor this spirit of anticipation, the Canticle of Praise is traditionally omitted. This simple change helps create space for quieter expectation, allowing the season's themes of longing, preparation, and hopeful watching to shape our worship

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Leader: Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

ANTHEM "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

arr. Cherwien

Chancel Choir

Lana Gilster, soloist, & Chloe Washington, oboe

Gayle Denny, Christine Lind, Lisa Oswald, & Marcia Stinson, handbell quartet

WORD

Dick Munson, Reader

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10

Old Testament 622

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.]]

³ Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!"

*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.*

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.”

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;

⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;

⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸ A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God’s people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

⁹ No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

¹⁰ And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 146:5-10

The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down. (Ps. 146:8)

⁵ Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,
whose hope is in the Lord their God;

⁶ **who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;
who keeps promises forever;**

⁷ who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who
hunger.

The Lord sets the captive free.

⁸ **The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; the Lord lifts up those
who are bowed down;**

the Lord loves the righteous.

⁹ The Lord cares for the stranger;

the Lord sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the
wicked.

¹⁰ **The Lord shall reign forever,**

your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

SECOND READING: James 5:7-10

New Testament 204

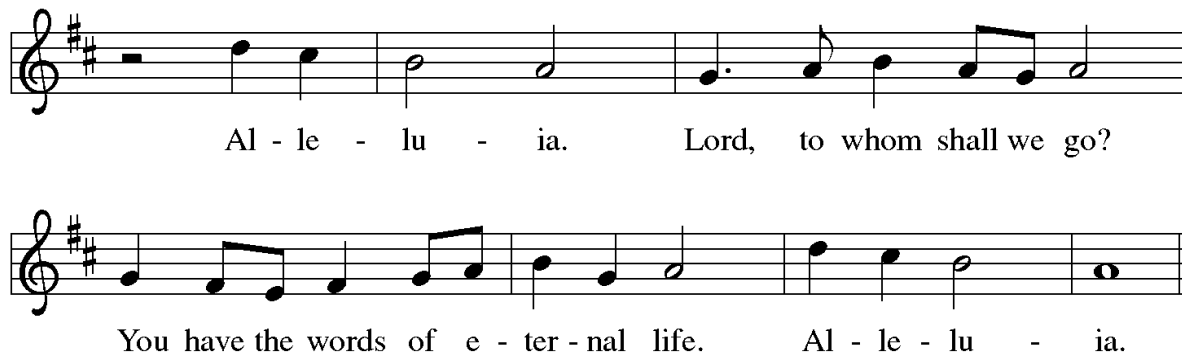
*In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate
patience rather than discontent.*

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord.
The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with
it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient.
Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and
sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be
judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of
suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke
in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



*GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

New Testament 9

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹ "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Reverend Jason Talsness

*HYMN OF THE DAY “Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding!”

Hymn 246

Verses 1-4



1 Hark! a thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! “Christ is near,” we
2 Wak - ened by the sol - emn warn - ing, from earth’s bond - age
3 See the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, come with par - don
4 So, when next he comes in glo - ry and the world is
5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, and bless - ing to the Fa - ther



hear it say. “Cast a - way the works of dark - ness,
let us rise; Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling,
down from heav’n. Let us haste, with tears of sor - row,
wrapped in fear, he will shield us with his mer - cy
and the Son with the ev - er - last - ing Spir - it



all you chil - dren of the day!”
shines up - on the morn - ing skies.
one and all, to be for - giv’n;
and with words of love draw near.
while un - end - ing a - ges run!

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814–1878
Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823–1889

Altar Flowers are
given today by **Craig
Geriner** “in loving
memory of his parents,
Richard & Betty
Geriner” and by **Diane
Munroe** “in loving
memory of Jack
Munroe.”

*The December Eternal
Candle* is given by
Terri Breyman “in
loving memory of
Terry Breyman—his
life was a blessing; his
memory is a treasure.”

***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.

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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

Leader: God of Grace,
People: Hear our prayer.

(Final petition and response.)

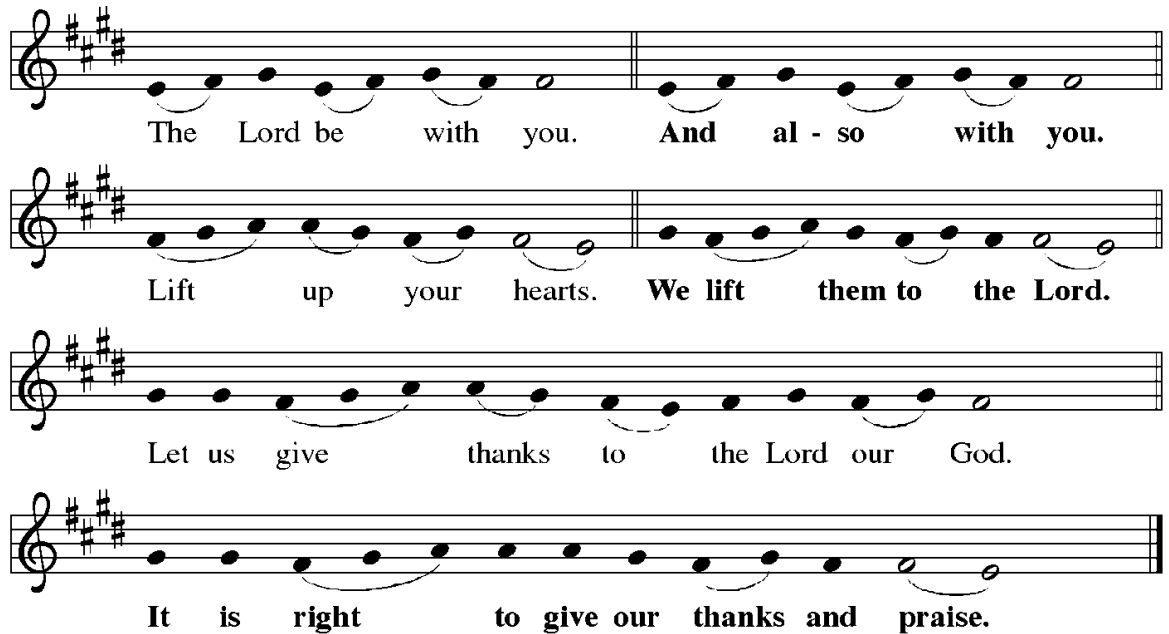
Leader: Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we
pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ,
Emmanuel.
People: Amen.

That Christ visited the dead after his crucifixion is based on I Peter 4:6 "For this is the reason the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that, though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does."

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.

MEAL

*DIALOGUE



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

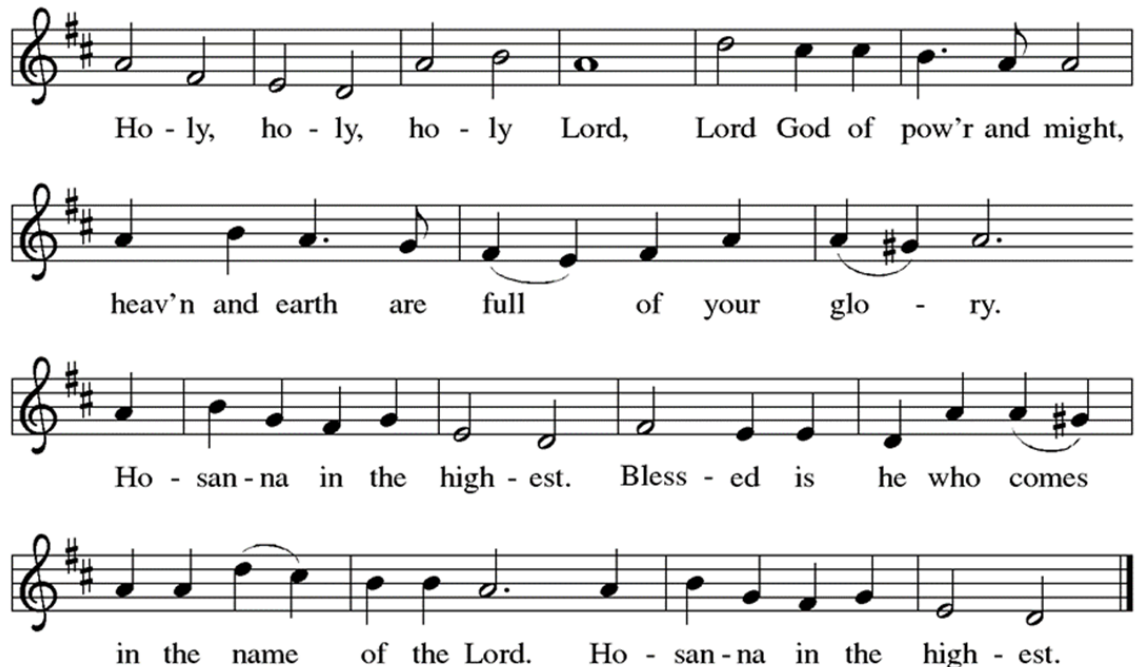
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*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

Here is life. God is with us.
Come, receive what God has promised.

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

SPECIAL MUSIC "Carol of the Stable"

Claire Sampson-Fields, soloist

Ford

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Leader: God our host,

People: at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.

Send us forth, eager to share the feast,

welcome the stranger,

and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

SENDING

***PASTORAL BENEDICTION**

May God who comes among us,

Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit,

grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,

and good news to share today and always.

Amen.

***SENDING SONG** “Joy to the World”

Hymn 267



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

***POSTLUDE** “Joy to the World”

Shirley Newhart, organ

arr. Young

PERMISSIONS

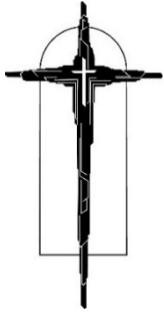
From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2011 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #37016.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Permission to reprint and stream music is granted under ONE LICENSE #A-729969. All rights reserved.

Permission to reprint and stream music is granted under CCLI LICENSES #20984671 AND #20984664. All rights reserved.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday, December 14	9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:20 am Adult Discipleship Class 10:20 am Confirmation Class
Monday, December 15	<i>8:00 am Landings Garden Club</i> 4:30 pm Council <i>6:30 pm Mahjong</i>
Tuesday, December 16	2:00 pm Outreach Ministry
Wednesday, December 17	8:30 am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 5:30 pm Advent Supper 6:15 pm Advent Midweek Worship 7:00 pm Choir Practice
Thursday, December 18	3:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal
Friday, December 19	
Saturday, December 20	

Italics indicate outside group



THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

Ministers	The People of Messiah
Pastor	Jason Talsness
Pastor, Congregational Care	Karen Scheib
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	Janet Reardon
Reader	Dick Munson
Evangelism Greeters	Patti & Al Small
Ushers	Ken Mitchell & Jim Ross
Acolytes	Confirmation Class
Communion Assistants	Christine Lind and Amanda Ridberg
Audio Visual	Steve Allen and Ken McLauchlan
Coffee Hour	Christine Lind (Host) and Cheryl Liebgott (Cake)

MILESTONES THIS WEEK

Birthdays: Dr. Eric Gilster 12/13, Brad VenHuizen 12/19

Anniversaries: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

IT'S BIRTHDAY SUNDAY

Join us for cake and celebrating those with December birthdays during Coffee Fellowship in Peper Hall following worship today.

SAVE THE DATE

The holidays will soon be here, so mark your calendars for these upcoming events:

- Advent midweek supper and worship at 5:30 pm on December 17.
- The Ladies' Epiphany Tea is at 10 am on Saturday, January 10. Details next week!

OUTREACH MINISTRY

Christmas Trees

Deadline: Sunday, December 14

The Outreach Ministry Christmas trees up in the Narthex and ready for shopping and giving. There will be one tree for students from The Learning Academy (formerly Coastal Georgia Comprehensive Academy). The second tree will support Ronald McDonald House families. An Outreach Ministry representative will be by each tree after Sunday worship to answer questions and give guidance.

LADIES BREAKFAST

Friday, December 19, 9:00 am

Meet at the Marshwood Club. Please make your reservations by December 14 with Lynn McLauchlan by text or phone (410.353.9795).

Salvation Army Bell Ringing

'Tis the season to ring the bell! This year, Messiah members are invited to sign up on the Salvation Army website directly. You may sign up as individuals or form your own group. The

website is registertoring.com. If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Nguyen (jenniferjnguyen@yahoo.com; 912.713.2797).

Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia

December's food is canned and dried fruit (raisins, apricots, cherries, craisins, etc.).

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Deadline: Monday, December 15

Christmas is coming, and soon Messiah's Sanctuary will be brimming with poinsettias. We invite you to give a Christmas poinsettia in honor or in memory of a loved one. The dedications will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin. The cost is \$14 per plant. To order, please pick up an envelope in the Sanctuary, Narthex, or Church Office. Then fill in the form, enclose your check, and return it to the Church Office or place it in the offering plate by Monday, December 15.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Following its holiday break, the Women's Bible Study will begin a 12-session study on Max Lucado's *Life Lessons from Revelation* beginning January 5, 2026. The apostle John writes about an amazing vision he saw while in exile that gave him a glimpse into heaven. His description stretches our imagination, fuels our anticipation, and comforts us as we wait for the final curtain call. Women's Bible Study meets on Mondays at 10 am. Please contact Randi VenHuizen at randiv1026@gmail.com or 402-216-3067 if you want to participate so a book can be ordered for you.

INTERESTED IN JOINING MESSIAH?

Messiah's Evangelism Ministry is planning a get-together for people interested in learning more about Messiah. The event will be in mid-January, and the date will be announced in late December. It will be an opportunity to learn

more about Messiah and to enjoy fellowship with other potential members and the Evangelism team. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Talsness or Claire Cornwell-Williams, Evangelism Chair (912.658.4114; cwilliams17@comcast.net).

SERMON PREVIEW

John the Baptist is thrown into prison by King Herod for speaking out against him. While in jail, John sends word to Jesus, wondering if he is indeed the Messiah. Jesus sends disciples with his response: "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

Questions for Reflection: What expectations—spoken or unspoken—do you carry about how God should act in the world? How do those expectations compare with the way Jesus actually works in the Gospels? Where in your own life, or in the life of this congregation, do you have expectations of restoration? John the Baptist sits in prison and begins to wonder about Jesus. What does restriction and/or confinement do to our faith?

CHURCH COUNCIL 2025

Jason Talsness, Pastor

770.570.7407

skidawaypastorj@gmail.com

Randi VenHuizen(2025)

Education & Discipleship Ministry

402.216.3067

Randiv1026@gmail.com

Claire Cornwell-Williams (2025)

President

Evangelism Ministry

912.658.4114

cwilliams17@comcast.net

Vacant

Finance Ministry

Lisa Oswald (2026)

Outreach Ministry

203.554.5845

laoswald@icloud.com

Gayle Denny (2026)

Parish Life Ministry

513.604.0764

gdgardner@comcast.net

Tim Andrews (2025)

Vice-President

Property Ministry

612.868.5222

timandrews1114@comcast.net

Milda Blaney (2025)*

Staff Support/Mutual Ministry

912.247.6898

mildablaney@gmail.com

Steve Derr (2025)

Stewardship Ministry

912.429.6371

sederr83@gmail.com

Parker Pearson (no term)

Treasurer

410.349.7704

parkpear@col.com

Pat Cooper (2027)

Worship & Music Ministry

912.508.4250

cooperpat5@gmail.com

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