

MESSIAH LUTHERAN

Seaside

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Sunday, February 1, 2026
4th Sunday after Epiphany



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 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 AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Susan Whitaker, Reader

PRELUDE "Thaxted"

Shirley Newhart, organ

arr. Trenney

*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,
the Creator of heaven and earth,
the Word who spoke life into being,
the Wind stirring the waters.

People: Amen.

Leader: Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us
completely.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Leader: Mighty God, lover of justice,

**People: you call us to life in community,
but we have served our own interests
at the expense of our neighbors.**

We have sown deceit where honesty was needed.

**We say the right words,
but our hearts are far from you.**

Turn us to seek your face.

**Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ,
that we may do justice, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God.**

Amen

Leader: The former things have passed away,
 and new things God now declares:
 Like a spring of water that never fails,
 God covers you in the righteousness of Christ,
 and forgives your sin in † Jesus' name.
 May the Spirit give you strength to live for others,
 and bless you with the gift of peace.

People: Amen.

***GATHERING SONG "Give Thanks"**

From "This Far by Faith"



Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,



give thanks be - cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son.



Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,



give thanks be - cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son.



And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am



rich," be - cause of what the Lord has done for us. And



now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am



rich," be - cause of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks!

Text: Henry Smith
 Music: GIVE THANKS, Henry Smith

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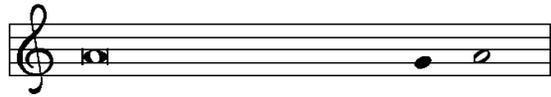
Kyrie" is a Greek word meaning "Lord." In Christian liturgy, particularly in Kyrie Eleison, it's used as a plea for God's mercy. The full phrase, "Kyrie eleison," translates to "Lord, have mercy," and has a common element in various Christian worship services since the 4th century.

***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.



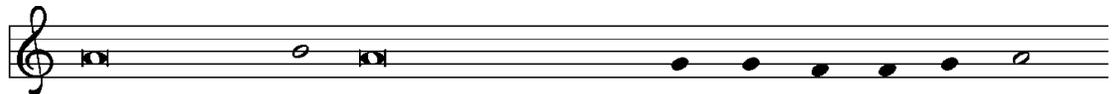
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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.

*CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Assisting minister



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa-ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-ceive our prayer.



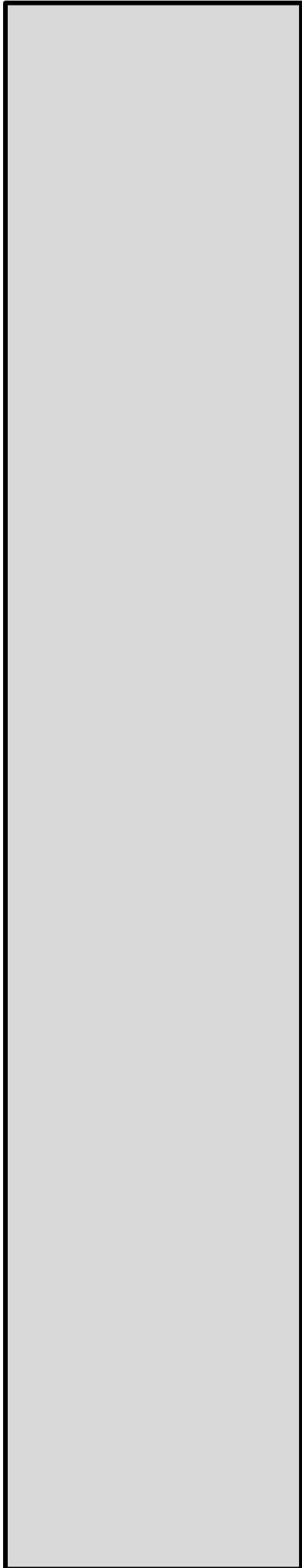
For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,



you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,



in the glo-ry of God the Fa-ther. A-men.



The anthem is a setting of The Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew."

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Leader: Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

People: **Amen.**

ANTHEM "Blest Are They"

Wetzler

Chancel Choir

Blest are they, the poor in spirit, theirs is the kingdom of God.

Blest are they, full of sorrow, they shall be consoled.

Rejoice, and be glad! Blessed are you, holy are you.

Rejoice, and be glad! Yours is the kingdom of God!

Blest are they, the lowly ones, they shall inherit the earth.

Blest are they who hunger and thirst, they shall have their fill.

Blest are they who show mercy, mercy shall be theirs.

Blest are they the pure of heart, they shall see God!

Blest are they who seek peace, they are the children of God.

Blest are they who suffer in faith, the glory of God is theirs.

Blest are they who suffer hate, all because of Me.

Rejoice and be glad, yours is the kingdom shine for all to see.

WORD

Susan Whitaker, Reader

FIRST READING: Isaiah 65:17-19

Old Testament 655

¹⁷For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth;
the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.

¹⁸But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating,
for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy and its people as a delight.

¹⁹I will rejoice in Jerusalem and delight in my people;
no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it
or the cry of distress.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALMODY: Psalm 15

Leader: ¹ Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle?
Who may abide upon your holy hill?

**People: ² Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,
who speak the truth from their heart;**

Leader: ³ they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their
friends; they do not cast discredit up-on a neighbor.

**People: ⁴ In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who
fear the Lord.**

**They have sworn upon their oath and do not take back their
word.**

Leader: ⁵ They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take
bribes against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

SECOND READING: Revelation 21:1-4,10-17

New Testament 230

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first
earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city,
the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a
bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the
throne saying,

“See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them and be their God;

⁴ he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away..”

¹⁰ And in the spirit he carried me away to a great, high mountain and
showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from

God. ¹¹ It has the glory of God and a radiance like a very rare jewel, like

jasper, clear as crystal. ¹² It has a great, high wall with twelve gates, and at

the gates twelve angels, and on the gates are inscribed the names that are

the names of the twelve tribes of the Israelites: ¹³ on the east three gates, on

the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three

gates. ¹⁴ And the wall of the city has twelve foundations, and on them are

the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Altar Flowers are given today by **Karen Floto** “in loving memory of her dear daughter Meg” and by **Genevieve & David Ridberg** “with Happy Birthday wishes and much love for Amanda Ridberg.”

The February *Eternal Candle* is given by **The Ridberg Family** “with blessings for the new Council members.”

¹⁵The angel who talked to me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. ¹⁶The city has four equal sides, its length the same as its width, and he measured the city with his rod, twelve thousand stadia; its length and width and height are equal. ¹⁷He also measured its wall, one hundred forty-four cubits by human measurement, which the angel was using.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



***GOSPEL: John 14:1-3**

New Testament 95

The Holy Gospel according to John
Glory to you, O Lord.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ²In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.

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

SERMON

Director of Faith Formation Ken Ritz

*HYMN OF THE DAY "Let Streams of Living Justice"

Hymn 710



1 Let streams of liv - ing jus - tice flow down up - on the earth;
2 For heal - ing of the na - tions, for peace that will not end,
3 Your ci - ty's built to mu - sic; we are the stones you seek;



give free - dom's light to cap - tives, let all the poor have worth.
for love that makes us lov - ers, God grant us grace to mend.
your har - mo - ny is lan - guage; we are the words you speak.



The hun - gry's hands are plead - ing, the work - ers claim their rights,
Weave our var - ied gifts to - geth - er; knit our lives as they are spun;
Our faith we find in ser - vice, our hope in oth - ers' dreams,



the mourn - ers long for laugh - ter, the blind - ed seek for sight.
on your loom of time en - roll us till our thread of life is run.
our love in hand of neigh - bor; our home - land bright - ly gleams.



Make lib - er - ty a bea - con, strike down the i - ron pow'r;
O great weav - er of our fab - ric, bind church and world in one;
In - scribe our hearts with jus - tice; your way—the path un - tried;



a - bol - ish an - cient ven - geance: pro - claim your peo - ple's hour.
dye our tex - ture with your ra - diance, light our col - ors with your sun.
your truth—the heart of strang - er; your life—the Cru - ci - fied.

Text: William Whitla, b. 1934
Music: THAXTED, Gustav Holst, 1874–1934
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***APOSTLES' CREED**

People: 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: Merciful God,

People: Receive our prayer.

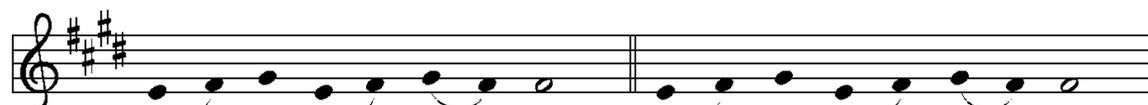
(Final petition and response.)

Leader: Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.

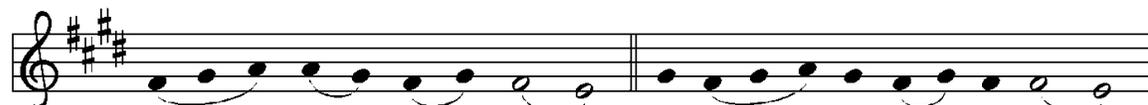
People: Amen.

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.

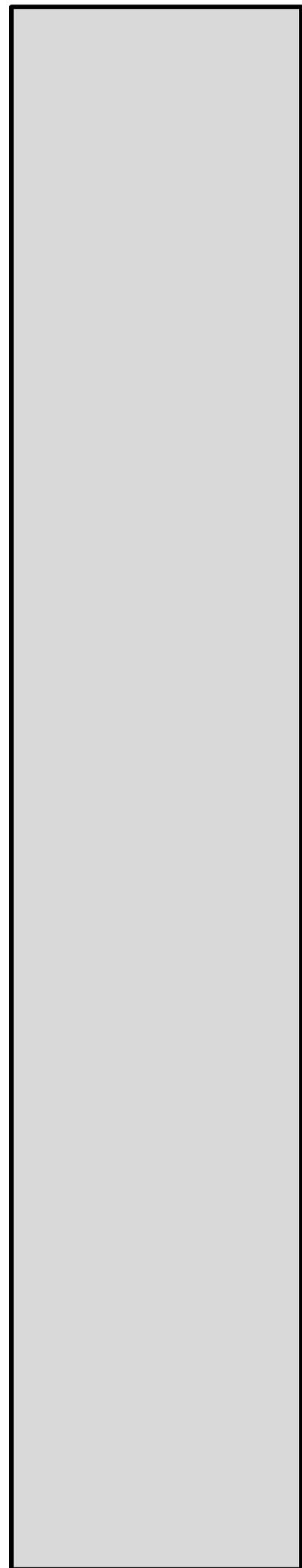


It is right to give our thanks and praise.

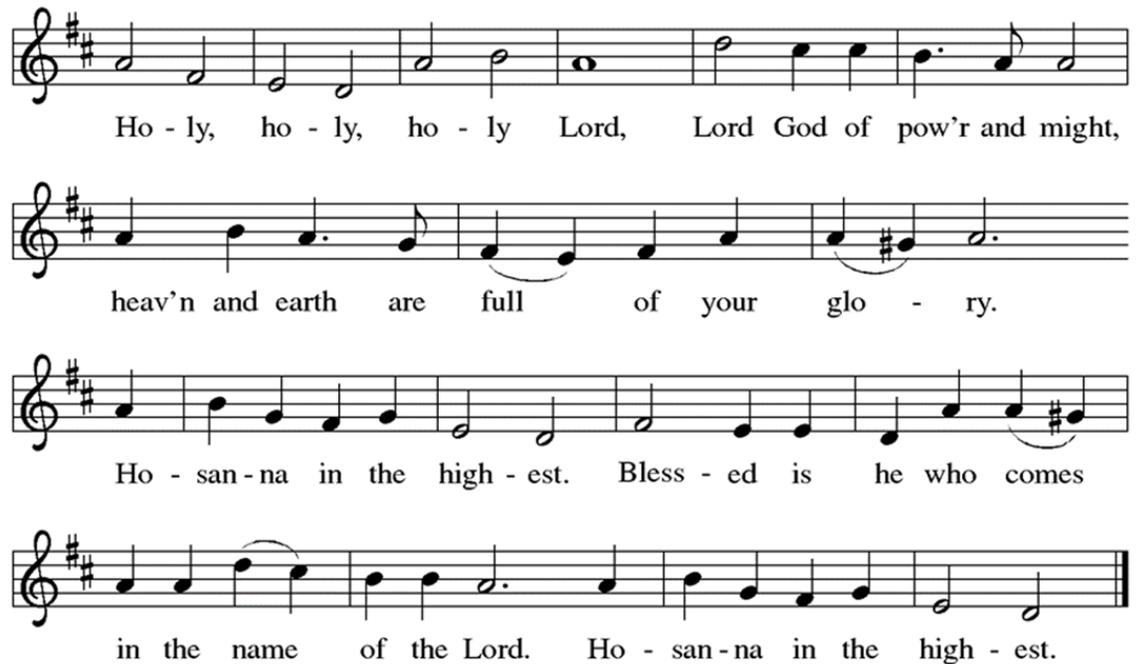
*PREFACE

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 the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
Come to the table; taste and see.

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: Radiant God,

People: we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

In the sacrament of his body and blood

you have drawn us to your heart.

Send us from this table with delight,

that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love,

and bear witness to all we have seen and heard,

through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

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SENDING

*PASTORAL BENEDICTION

Leader: May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise † bless you now and forever.

People: Amen.

*SENDING SONG “The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve”

Hymn 551



1 The Spir - it sends us forth to serve; we go in
 2 We go to com - fort those who mourn and set the
 3 We go to be the hands of Christ, to scat - ter
 4 Then let us go to serve in peace, the gos - pel



Je - sus' name to bring glad tid - ings
 bur - dened free; where hope is dim, to
 joy like seed and, all our days, to
 to pro - claim. God's Spir - it has em -



to the poor, God's fa - vor to pro - claim.
 share a dream and help the blind to see.
 cher - ish life, to do the lov - ing deed.
 pow - ered us; we go in Je - sus' name.

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 Music: CHESTERFIELD, attr. Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820
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*DISMISSAL

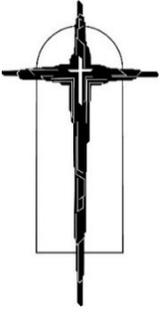
Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*POSTLUDE “Toccatà”

Pachelbel

Shirley Newhart, organ



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday, February 1	9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:20 am Adult Discipleship Class 10:20 am Confirmation Class
Monday, February 2	<i>10:00 am Savannah Newcomers</i> 10:00 am Women's Bible Study 5:00 pm RMH Dinner 5:00 pm Nordic Choir Dinner 7:00 pm Nordic Choir Concert
Tuesday, February 3	4:30 pm Council
Wednesday, February 4	8:30 am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 10:00 am PLARning Group 4:30 pm Investment Committee 7:00 pm Choir Practice
Thursday, February 5	2:00 pm Telephone Demo 3:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal
Friday, February 6	<i>1:00 pm Needlepoint Society</i> 3:30 pm Understanding Your Grief
Saturday, February 7	

Italics indicate outside group

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 Give 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.



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	Pat Cooper
Reader	Susan Whitaker
Evangelism Greeters	Christine Lind and Pattye Field
Ushers	Ken Mitchell and Jim Ross
Acolytes	Confirmation Class
Communion Assistants	Terry Blaney, Lynn McLauchlan, and Diane Munroe
Audio Visual	Steve Allen and Ken McLauchlan
Coffee Hour	Christine Lind (Host)

MILESTONES THIS WEEK

Birthdays: Amanda Ridberg 02/04, Marcie Perry 02/05, Karen Dreger 02/05

Anniversaries: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

REMINDER: NORDIC CHOIR CONCERT Monday, February 2, 7:00 pm

Be sure to attend the special concert tomorrow evening here in the Sanctuary. The Luther College Choir will be performing. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students; the “box office” opens at 6:00 pm on Monday evening.

EXPLORING THE TOPIC OF HEAVEN Monthly on the Second Thursday

Interested in thoughtful conversation about what Scripture and Christian teaching say about heaven? Join our new small group discussion gathering.

This new small group will meet monthly on the second Thursday evenings at 6:30 PM, beginning February 12, at the Ritz’s home, 15 Middleton Road, in the Landings.

Each gathering will be relaxed and welcoming. Everyone is asked to bring an appetizer or snack to share. There will be dinner together, followed by about 45 minutes of guided discussion focused on the topic of heaven.

Two books on heaven will be used as a foundation for our conversations, but you do not need to purchase or read either book to attend.

If you are interested or would simply like more information, there is a signup sheet on the Narthex Kiosk. You can also speak with Ken Ritz, Director of Faith Formation, (ken-ritz@gmail.com; 513.907.6191)

PLANNING SURVEY

Deadline: February 15

Just a reminder to complete the church strategic planning survey if you have not already done so. Response rates have been excellent so far so don’t miss your opportunity for your voice to be heard

The Messiah Minute and a special email have gone out with the link to the strategic planning survey. If you did not receive the email, please contact the Church Office to request a follow-up. If you prefer to complete a paper copy of the survey, you can also request a hard copy from the Church Office. If you have questions, talk to the Strategic Planning Team: Howard Anderson, Ken Hylander, or Pastor Talsness

CONFIRMATION

Sunday, February 15

Oskar Liu-Johnson will be confirmed during worship on Sunday, February 15. His family will host a celebration following worship in Peper Hall, and everyone is invited to attend.

A SPECIAL CHOIR OPPORTUNITY

What is VOX CORDIUM? It is a special emphasis choir for Lent and Easter. VOX CORDIUM translated means "Voice from the Heart." Every choir member's voice will unite to sing music that is from the heart. Lent is a perfect time to set aside some time for service and commitment by joining the VOX CORDIUM choir. It is a commitment of just 7 weeks, 7 hours, 7 Sundays. The VOX CORDIUM choir starts on Wednesday, February 18th at 6:00 p.m. and concludes on

Easter Sunday, April 5th. On Easter Sunday, the VOX CORDIUM choir will present, *The Hallelujah Chorus*.

We are seeking at least nine new members to

make this choir possible. Please consider signing up on the Narthex Kiosk today! For more information, contact Choir Director Rodney Powers (rodneykp@gmail.com; 912.321.4048).

SERMON PREVIEW

Most people have questions about heaven—where it is, what it will be like, whether it is a place or a state of being, and what we will actually do there. Some imagine clouds and harps, others picture a vague spiritual existence, and many are simply unsure. Yet the Bible speaks often and confidently about our future with God, not to satisfy curiosity, but to anchor our hope. Today we will explore what Scripture reveals about heaven: where it is, what the new creation will be like, the kind of bodies we will have, and what we will do there. Along the way, we will also address some common questions believers ask—because heaven is not meant to be a mystery that confuses us, but a promise that strengthens us.

For those who would like to do further research, here are the scriptures covered in the sermon.

- John 14:1-3
- 2 Corinthians 12:1-2 NLT
- Luke 23:43
- 2 Corinthians 5:8
- 1 Corinthians 15:35,42-43,48,51-53
- Revelation 21:1-4,10,15-17
- Isaiah 65:17-19,24-25
- Matthew 22:30
- Hebrews 12:1
- Genesis 3:19
- Revelation 22:5
- Matthew 25:23
- Revelation 21:6

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION

2026 Spiritual Growth Activity

We are inviting our whole church family to participate in a **12-month spiritual growth journey**. Each month we will focus on one simple, but meaningful activity designed to help you draw closer to Christ.

February—Read One Gospel in One Sitting (1.5-2 hours)

Choose either the Gospel of Mark (shorter, fast-moving) or the Gospel of John (reflective, rich-in-meaning) and set aside enough time to read the entire Gospel without rushing. A modern translation such as New International Version, New Living Translation, or English Standard Version is recommended.

As you read, pay attention not just to the events but to **Jesus' character**, noticing how He treats people, how He responds to interruptions, and what emotions He expresses. Watch for His **mission**—what He says He came to do, how He speaks about the Kingdom of God, and what priorities guide His choices. Finally, reflect on His **heart**—what He cares about most deeply, where He shows compassion, and what grieves or angers Him. End with a simple prayer of gratitude and response.

This extended reading helps you see the big picture of Jesus' life and ministry and deepens your understanding of His heart and mission.

Read an Epistle with Study

For those who want an additional challenge...Choose Philippians, Ephesians, or James.

Read it twice. Pay attention to its historical setting, major themes, and key commands (use a study Bible or trusted commentary if helpful). Write a brief summary of what the letter teaches about Christian living and how it applies to your current habits or lifestyle.

CHURCH COUNCIL 2026

Jason Talsness, Pastor

770.570.7407

skidawaypastorj@gmail.com

Randi VenHuizen (2028)

Education & Discipleship Ministry

402.216.3067

Randiv1026@gmail.com

Claire Cornwell-Williams (2028)

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

gdgardener@comcast.net

Rick Tallon (2028)

Property Ministry

417.294.2002

rick.tallon@gmail.com

Greg Stinson (2026/2027)¹

Staff Support/Mutual Ministry

912.704.4084

gtstinson@comcast.net

George Lawrence (2026/2028)²

Stewardship Ministry

912.484.2818

Mppgg13@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

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

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