



MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH
1 West Ridge Road, Savannah, GA 31411
(912) 598-1188
www.messiahsi.org



Built on a Faithful **FOUNDATION**

2027 STEWARDSHIP APPEAL

STEWARDSHIP OF OUR MINISTRY

Every Sunday, Messiah opens its doors for worship, welcome, and care. Behind that welcome are the ministries that support our mission—Worship & Music, Outreach, Pastoral Care, Faith Formation, Parish Life. All of it depends on the everyday necessities of congregational life—insurance, utilities, staffing, building and grounds care, and more.

Like every household and business, Messiah feels the rising cost of living and doing business. Council works carefully to appropriately manage our finances, including finding savings such as eliminating unfilled positions and spending on completed priorities. Even with those savings, the cost of maintaining our current ministries will rise in the coming year.

This is not new spending. It is what it takes to keep doing well what Messiah already does, so that the ministries our members and neighbors count on remain strong.

For 2027, increased giving of \$595 per week will allow us to accomplish all our ministry goals, including stewarding our ministry.

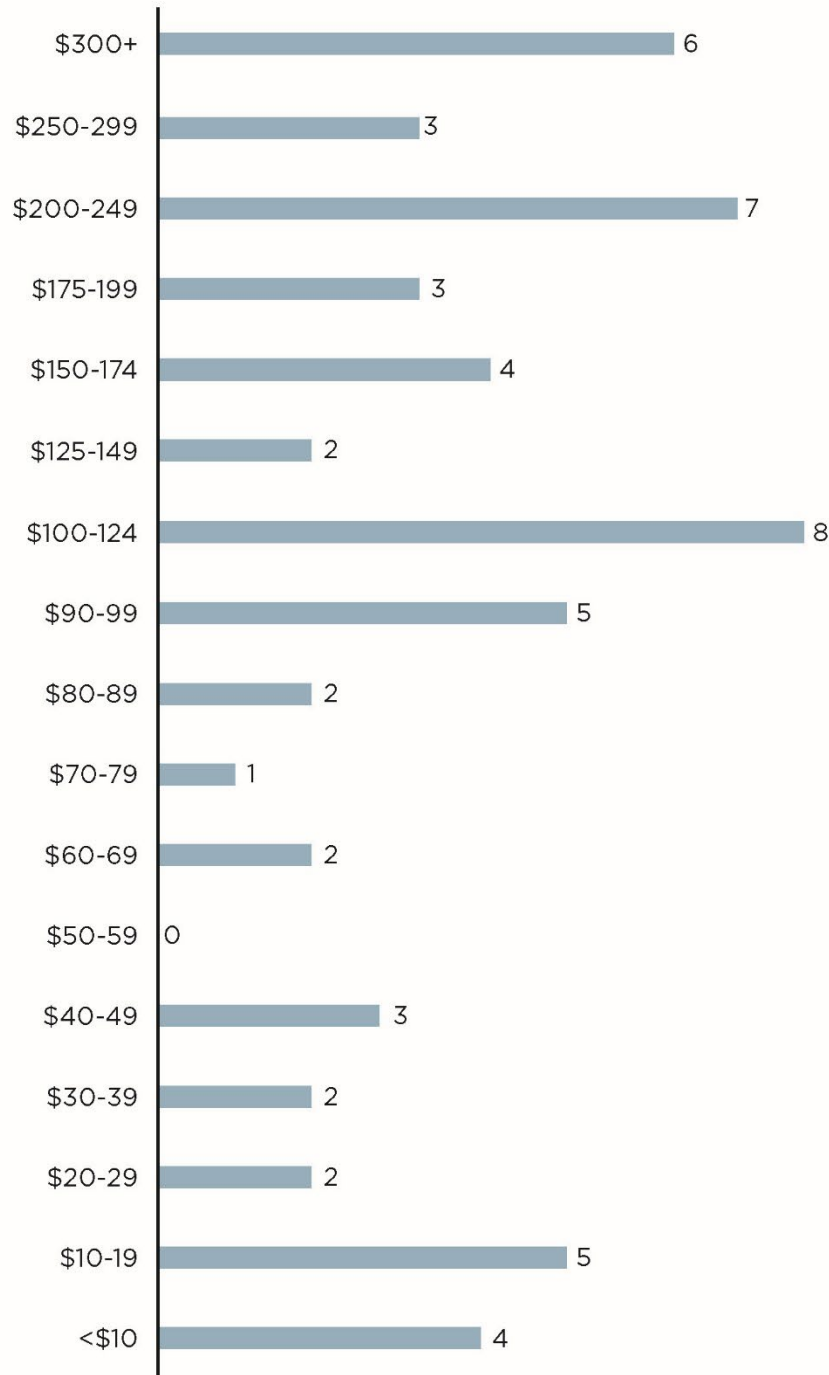
As you prayerfully consider your 2027 commitment, know that every gift, at every level, helps maintain the foundation on which all of Messiah's ministry stands.

GIVING TOGETHER

The bar graph displays our giving. Ask yourself:

- How does my giving level compare with other ways I use my money?
- How does my giving reflect my gratitude to God for all the blessings I have received?
- How would my life change if I doubled my giving?
- How much more could I give if I really wanted to?

RANGE OF GIFTS GIVEN



GIFT LEVEL WEEKLY RATE



To submit your intent online,
scan the QR code



or visit messiahsl.org/give

Number of Current Givers 59

WELCOME TO THIS
WORSHIP CELEBRA-
TION 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

Gayle Denny, reader

PRELUDE "The Church's One Foundation"

Wesley/setting by Ore

Shirley Newhart, organ

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Leader: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose compassion endures forever.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Let us confess our sin to God.
Silence is kept for reflection

Leader: Compassionate God.

People: **we confess to you all our sins.
Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves.
In your mercy, call us back to you.
Your yoke is easy and your burden is light.
Restore us to dwell in your peace.
In Christ's name we pray,
Amen.**

Leader: Jesus says, "Come to me,
all you who are weary
and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest."
In the name of God,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
your sins are forgiven.
Rest in God's love.

People: **Amen.**

*GATHERING SONG "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"

Hymn 836



- 1 Joy - ful, joy - ful we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!
- 2 All thy works with joy sur-round thee, earth and heav'n re - flect thy rays,
- 3 Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless-ing, ev - er blest,



Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore thee, prais-ing thee, their sun a - bove.
stars and an - gels sing a-round thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.
well-spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean-depth of hap - py rest!



Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive the gloom of doubt a - way.
Field and for - est, vale and moun-tain, flow-'ry mead-ow, flash - ing sea,
Thou our Fa - ther, Christ our broth - er, all who live in love are thine;



Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.
chant-ing bird, and flow - ing foun - tain call us to re - joice in thee.
teach us how to love each oth - er, lift us to the joy di - vine!

Text: Henry van Dyke, 1852–1922

Music: HYMN TO JOY, Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770–1827, adapt.

*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" 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

Leader: Not by our own strength or goodness, but by your grace alone, O God, are we made righteous.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: When we place our trust in ourselves rather than your promises, turn our hearts again to Christ.

People: **Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: Renew your church by the power of your Holy Spirit, that we may live in the freedom of the Gospel.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: For the grace that claims us, the faith that sustains us, and the love that makes us new, let us give thanks to God!

*CANTICLE OF PRAISE "Now Thank We All Our God"

Hymn 840

Verse 1



1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,
2 Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
3 All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,



who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,
the Son, and Spirit blest, who reign in highest heaven,



who, from our mothers' arms, has blest us on our way
and keep us all in grace, and guide us when perplexed,
the one eternal God, whom earth and heaven adore;



with countless gifts of love, and still is ours to-day.
and free us from all harm in this world and the next.
for thus it was, is now, and shall be ever more.

Text: Martin Rinkhart, 1586–1649; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878
Music: NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT, Johann Crüger, 1598–1662

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Leader: Almighty God, gracious Lord, we thank you that your Holy Spirit renews the church in every age. Pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in your word, protect and comfort them in times of trial, defend them against all enemies of the gospel, and bestow on the church your saving peace, 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 “A Mighty Fortress”

Luther/Price

Chancel Choir

WORD

Gayle Denny, reader

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:31-34

Old Testament 694

The renewed covenant will not be breakable, but like the old covenant it will expect the people to live upright lives. To know the Lord means that one will defend the cause of the poor and needy (Jer. 22:16). The renewed covenant is possible only because the Lord will forgive iniquity and not remember sin. Our hope lies in a God who forgets.

³¹ The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.

The reading of Scripture is the time that 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALMODY: Psalm 46

The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold. (Ps. 46:7)

Leader: ¹ God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.

People: ² **Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved,
and though the mountains shake in the depths of the sea;**

Leader: ³ though its waters rage and foam,
and though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

People: ⁴ **There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.**

Leader: ⁵ God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be shaken;
God shall help it at the break of day.

People: ⁶ **The nations rage, and the kingdoms shake;
God speaks, and the earth melts away.**

Leader: ⁷ The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

People: ⁸ **Come now, regard the works of the Lord,
what desolations God has brought upon the earth;**

Leader: ⁹ behold the one who makes war to cease in all the world;
who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the
shields with fire.

People: ¹⁰ **“Be still, then, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted
in the earth.”**

Leader: ¹¹ The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

SECOND READING: Romans 3:19-28

New Testament page 135

Paul's words stand at the heart of the preaching of Martin Luther and other Reformation leaders. No human beings make themselves right with God through works of the law. We are brought into a right relationship with God through the divine activity centered in Christ's death. This act is a gift of grace that liberates us from sin and empowers our faith in Jesus Christ.

¹⁹ Now we know that, whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰ For no human will be justified before him by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

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 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: John 8:31-36**

New Testament page 88

Jesus speaks of truth and freedom as spiritual realities known through his word. He reveals the truth that sets people free from sin.

*Today's Altar Flowers
are given by Rodney
Powers "in honor of
what would have been
the 43rd anniversary
of my marriage to my
late wife" and by
Layne and Gary
Rabold "to the Glory
of God."*

*Lynn & Ken McLau-
chlan donated the Oc-
tober Eternal Candle
"for the glory of God."*

Leader: The Gospel according to John.

People: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

³¹ Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." ³³ They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be made free'?"

³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵ The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. ³⁶ So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON "A Promise to People Who Have Failed"

Pastor Jason Talsness

*HYMN OF THE DAY “Blest Are They”

Hymn 728

Verses 1-4

Leader or All



1 Blest are they, the poor in spir - it; theirs is the
2 Blest are they, the low - ly ones; . . . they shall in -
3 Blest are they who show mer - cy;
4 Blest are they who seek peace; . . they are the
5 Blest are you who suf - fer hate, . . . all . . . be -



king - dom of God. Blest are they,
her - it the earth. Blest are they who
shall . . . be theirs. Blest are they the
chil - dren of God. Blest are they who
cause . . . of me. Re - joice, be glad,

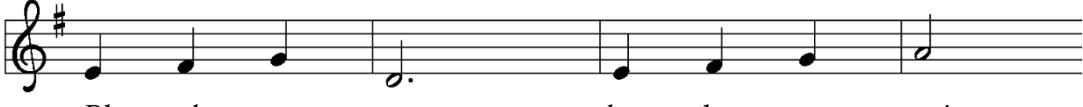


full of sor - row; they shall be con - soled.
hun - ger and thirst; they shall have their fill.
pure of heart; they shall see God.
suf - fer in faith; the glo - ry of God is theirs.
yours is the king - dom; shine for all to see.

Refrain
All



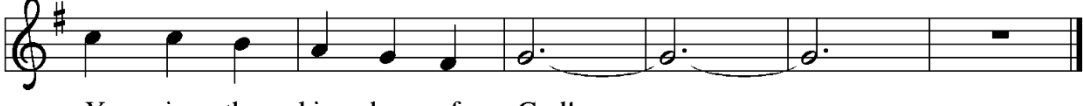
Re - joice and be glad!



Bless - ed are you, ho - ly are you!



Re - joice and be glad!



Yours is the king - dom of God!

Text: David Haas, b. 1957

Music: BLEST ARE THEY, David Haas

Text and music © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.

All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

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.

That Christ visited the dead after his crucifixion is based on 1 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."

***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

George Lawrence, Chair, Stewardship Ministry

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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

Leader: Hear us, O God,

People: **Your mercy is great.**

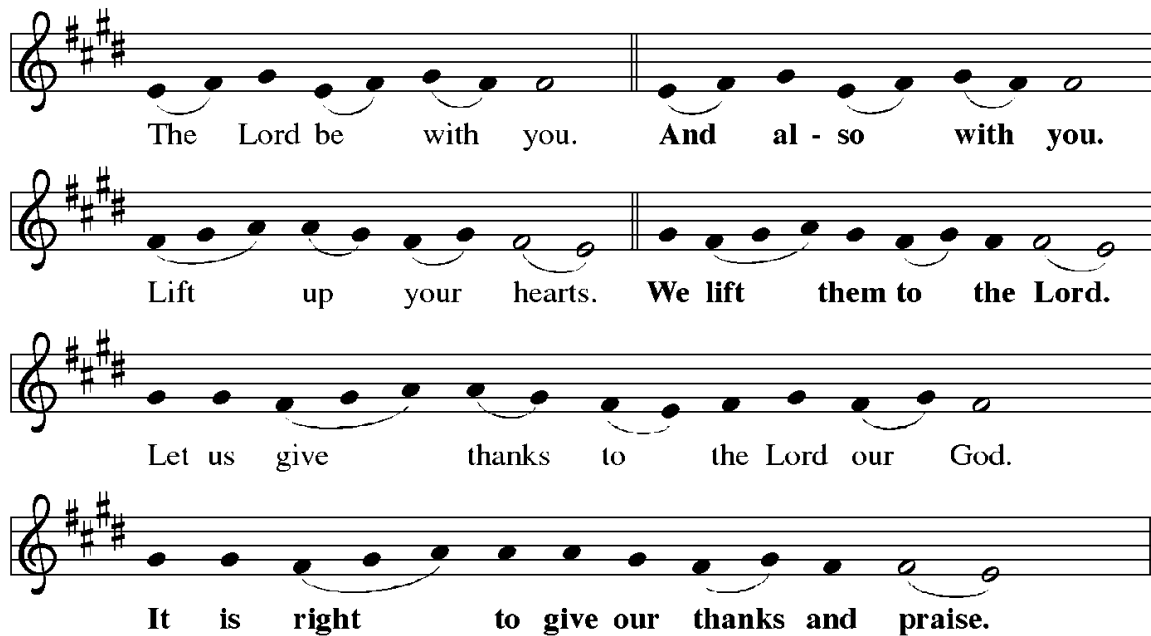
(Final petition and response.)

Leader: Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up
these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus
Christ our Lord.

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.

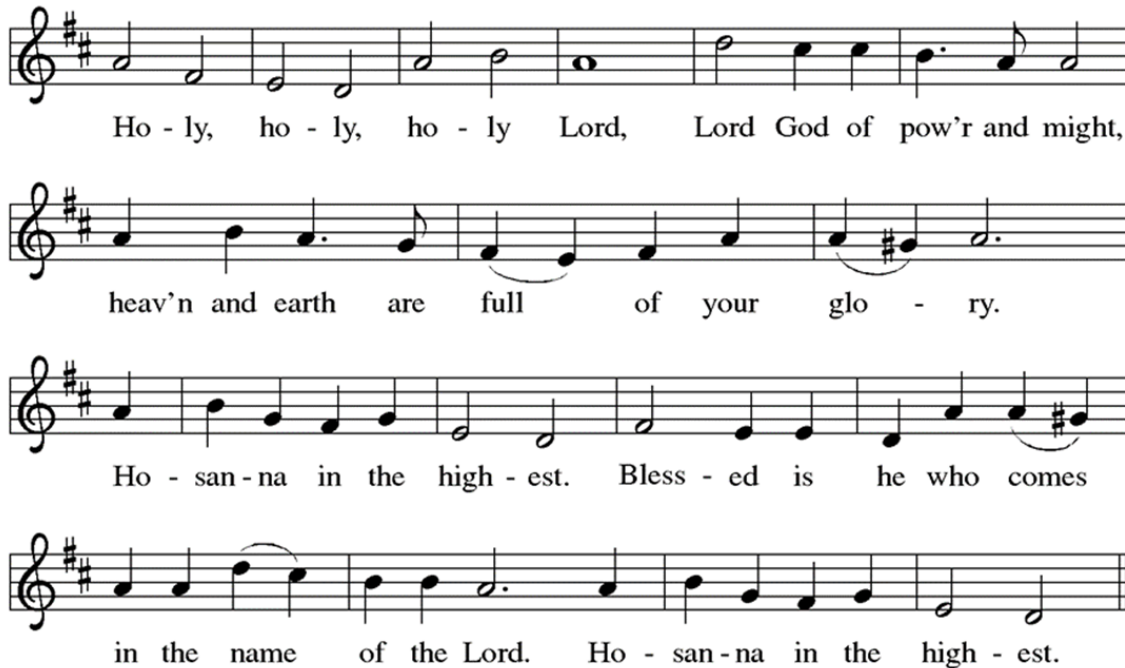
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*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**

People: 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: Compassionate God,
People: through the gifts of bread and wine
our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love.
Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal,
may share your love freely, as you have shared with us.
We ask this in the name of Jesus,
through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever.
Amen.

SENDING

*PASTORAL BENEDICTION

Leader: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ☩ one God,
bless, heal, and hold you
today and always.

People: Amen

*SENDING SONG “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

Hymn 631



1 Love di-vine, all loves ex-cel-ling, Joy of heav'n, to
2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov-ing Spir-it in-to ev-'ry
3 Come, Al-might-y, to de-liv-er; let us all thy
4 Fin-ish then thy new cre-a-tion, pure and spot-less



earth come down! Fix in us thy hum-ble dwell-ing, all thy
trou-bled breast; let us all in thee in-her-it; let us
life re-ceive; sud-den-ly re-turn, and nev-er, nev-er-
let us be; let us see thy great sal-va-tion per-fect-



faith-ful mer-cies crown. Je-sus, thou art all com-pas-sion,
find thy prom-ised rest. Take a-way the love of sin-n-ing;
more thy tem-ples leave. Thee we would be al-ways bless-ing,
ly re-stored in thee! Changed from glo-ry in-to glo-ry,



pure, un-bound-ed love thou art; vis-it us with
Al-pha and O-me-ga be; end of faith, as
serve thee as thy hosts a-bove, pray, and praise thee
till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our



thy sal-va-tion, en-ter ev-'ry trem-bling heart.
its be-gin-ning, set our hearts at lib-er-ty.
with-out ceas-ing, glo-ry in thy per-fect love.
crowns be-fore thee, lost in won-der, love, and praise!

PERMISSIONS

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

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

Scripture quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition (NRSVue) Bible. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

New Revised Standard Version Bible (NSRV), 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.

Holy Bible, New International Version™, NIV™ Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used with permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

*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.*

***DISMISSAL**

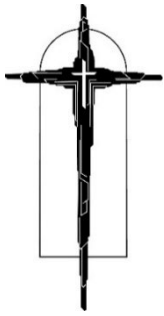
Leader: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

***POSTLUDE** “Ein’ feste Burg (A Mighty Fortress)”

arr. Marpurg

Shirley Newhart, organ



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Italics indicate outside group

Sunday, October 25	8:30 am Chancel Choir Warmup 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:20 am Adult Discipleship Class 10:20 am Confirmation Class
Monday, October 26	8:00 am <i>Landings Garden Club</i> 10:00 am Women's Bible Study 4:30 pm Council 6:30 pm <i>Mahjong</i>
Tuesday, October 27	3:00 pm MLC Staff Meeting 6:30 pm Messiah Reads
Wednesday, October 28	8:30 am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 4:30 pm Finance & Investment Committee 7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, October 29	3:30 pm Handbell Rehearsal
Friday, October 30	
Saturday, October 31	

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) 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	Jane Holst & Kay Yablecki
Reader	Gayle Denny
Communion Assistants	Amanda Ridberg & Marcia Stinson
Evangelism Greeters	Debra & Dean Coon
Ushers	Terry Blaney and Kathy Ritz
Audio Visual	Steve Allen and Ken McLauchlan
Coffee Hour	Gayle Denny (host) Jane Holst (treats)

MILESTONES THIS WEEK

*Birthdays: Steve Derr 10/25; Randi VenHuizen 10/26; Jill Poole 10/27;
George Lawrence 10/28; Billy Ray 10/29*

Anniversaries: Tamara & Steve Walker 10/29

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MESSIAH READS

Tuesday, October 27, 6:30 pm

The book club's October meeting will be at the home of Joni DiGiorgio (jldigiorgio@aol.com). The featured book is *The Museum of Second Chances* by Jo Leever.

If you would like to join this group, please contact Patti Small (smallpatricia13@yahoo.com).

STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

The Strategic Planning Committee is pleased to announce two upcoming discussion sessions to explore, in more detail, follow-on topics identified during our survey as well as planning work earlier in the year. The sessions will be held after church in place of Adult Discipleship Class in the Conference Room:

1. November 8 - Who are we called to serve and what does our future congregation look like? Survey and demographic data will be shared, and our discussion will explore where is God calling us in regard to reaching new members.
2. December 13 - What opportunities exist to further enhance our worship and music experience? Worship and music are foundational elements of our faith experience. How do we use worship and music as an entry point into people's lives and what is our worship and music identity in the future?

Please sign up for one or both sessions on the Narthex Kiosk. If you have any questions please contact a member of the Strategic Planning Committee - Ken Hylander, Howard Anderson, and Barbara Moore.

EMPTY BOWL FUNDRAISER

**Sunday, November 1 at Reynolds Square
11:00 am to 1:30 pm**

This mission-driven ceramic arts show and tasting will feature soups prepared by Union Mission's culinary team, along with additional bites from our culinary partners – The Olde Pink House, Collins Quarter, Sentient Bean and Leopold's Ice Cream – and live music by harpist Kristen King. Each attendee may select a handcrafted bowl and branded tote to take home as a reminder of our community's compassion and care.

Following the event, guests are invited to tour the new Emmaus House Resource Center at 127 Fahm Center. The optional tour will begin at 1:30 p.m., and parking will be available. Proceeds will support the Emmaus House Resource Center, which serves more than 200 individuals each day by providing meals, medical care, counseling and case management, workforce development, dignity services, and housing navigation – all in one location.

A RETURN TO THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

At its October meeting, Messiah's Worship and Music Ministry voted to include the Sharing of the Peace in our order of worship during November and December on a temporary, trial basis. Messiah discontinued this practice before the COVID pandemic because of health concerns. Since then, members have expressed interest in bringing it back.

Biblical and Historical Background

The Sharing of the Peace has ancient roots in Christian worship. In Matthew 5:23–24, Jesus teaches the importance of reconciliation with one another before bringing our gifts to the altar. The apostle Paul repeatedly encourages Christians to greet one another with a holy kiss (Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20). And in John's Gospel, the risen Christ greets his disciples with the words, "Peace be with you" (John 20:19).

By the second century, Christians were exchanging a sign of peace during worship. Over the centuries, the practice has taken different forms and occupied different places in the liturgy. In our Lutheran tradition, the Sharing of the Peace ordinarily follows the Prayers of Intercession. It is intended to express the peace and reconciliation we receive through Christ and share with one another.

Benefits and Concerns

At its best, the Sharing of the Peace is a brief expression of Christian community and reconciliation. It reminds us that worship is not simply an individual experience, but something we share as the body of Christ. At the same time, there are reasonable concerns about including this practice in worship. It adds time to the service and can interrupt the flow of the liturgy. Some worshipers are uncomfortable with physical contact, while visitors and others who do not know many people may find the experience awkward or even isolating. It is also worth remembering that the Sharing of the Peace, while rooted in biblical themes, is not a required element of Christian worship.

November and December

For these two months, we will include the Sharing of the Peace as a brief exchange with those immediately around us. This is temporary, not a decision to restore it permanently. Following this period, the Worship and Music Ministry will consider what we have learned from the experience. Our hope is that we can approach these two months with openness and consideration for one another, recognizing that faithful Christians may have different experiences of this part of worship.

We encourage everyone to use the traditional words, "Peace be with you" or "The peace of Christ be with you," rather than ordinary social greetings. Physical contact is not necessary. A spoken greeting, a nod, or another simple gesture is entirely appropriate. But shaking of the hands is common for those who wish to. Otherwise even a fist bump can suffice.

SERMON PREVIEW

A Promise to People Who Have Failed

In our first reading from Jeremiah, Israel had broken its covenant, its agreement with God. They had failed to live faithfully, and the consequences were real. Yet through the prophet Jeremiah, God announced something remarkable. God will make a new covenant, a new agreement: “The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah” (31:31). Through Christ, we Christians count ourselves among the recipients of this same gracious promise.

This Sunday is Reformation Sunday, when we celebrate our heritage as Lutheran Christians. We will consider how Martin Luther and the reformers rediscovered the heart of the gospel: God’s grace is freely given, not earned, and what that promise means for us today.

The Good News is not that we are more faithful people; the Good News is that God is more gracious than we can comprehend.

Questions for reflection (these are not easy): How do you distinguish between striving to live faithfully and trying to earn God’s favor? Jeremiah’s promise was made to an entire community, not just to individuals. What might God’s promise mean for a congregation that has made mistakes or fallen short of its calling? Martin Luther and the reformers sought to recover the central message of the gospel. What might the church today need to rediscover or recover? If the Good News is not that we are more faithful than we imagine, but that God is more gracious than we can comprehend, how might that change the way we live?

CHURCH COUNCIL 2026

Jason Talsness, Pastor

(912) 556-8056

skidawaypastorj@gmail.com

Peggy Pearson (2026)

Education & Discipleship Ministry

443.995.1146

parkpear@aol.com

Claire Cornwell-Williams (2028)

President

Evangelism Ministry

912.658.4114

cwilliams17@comcast.net

Vacant

Finance Ministry

Lisa Oswald (2026)

Secretary

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

mppggl13@gmail.com

Parker Pearson (no term)

Treasurer

410.349.7704

parkpear@aol.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.

