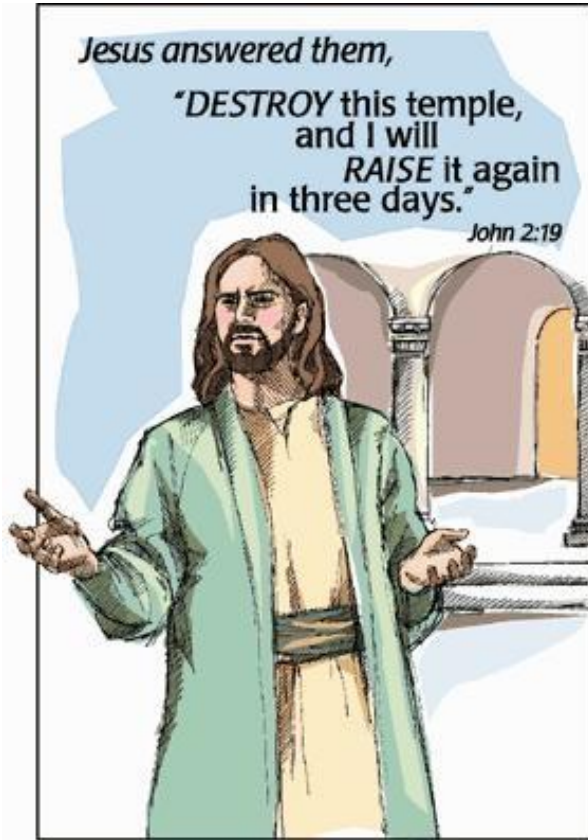


Messiah Lutheran Church

GATHER, EMPOWER, SERVE



✠ Holy Communion ✠

Third Sunday in Lent

March 3, 2024

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT



The third covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the central one of Israel's history: the gift of the law to those God freed from slavery. The commandments begin with the statement that because God alone has freed us from the powers that oppressed us, we are to let nothing else claim first place in our lives. When Jesus throws the merchants out of the temple, he is defending the worship of God alone and rejecting the ways commerce and profit-making can become our gods. The Ten Commandments are essential to our baptismal call: centered first in God's liberating love, we strive to live out justice and mercy in our communities and the world.

GATHERING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who writes the law on our hearts,
who draws all people together through Jesus.

C: Amen.

P: Held in God's mercy, let us confess our sin
in the presence of God and of one another.

Kneel

P: Holy God,

C: we confess that we are caught in snares of sin
and cannot break free.

**We hoard resources while our neighbors
are hungry and cold.**

We speak in ways that silence others.

We are silent when we should speak up.

We let hurts grow into hatred.

**For all these things and for sins only you know,
forgive us, Lord.**

Amen.

P: God's grace is abundant:
Out of love for the whole world,
God draws near to us,
breaks every snare of sin,
washes away our wrongs,
and restores the promise of life through † Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

Stand

GATHERING HYMN

In the Cross of Christ I GloryLBW 104

APOSTOLIC GREETING

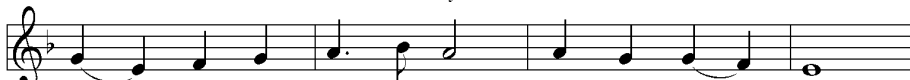
P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

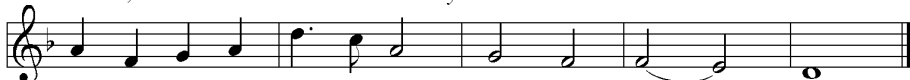
KYRIE



A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: **C** Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:



A Chri - ste e - le - i - son: **C** Christ, have mer - cy.
Christ, have mer - cy:



A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: **C** Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

Holy God, through your Son you have called us to live faithfully and act courageously. Keep us steadfast in your covenant of grace, and teach us the wisdom that comes only through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sit

WORD**FIRST READING: Exodus 20:1-17**

After escaping from slavery, the Israelites come to Mount Sinai, where God teaches them how to live in community. The Ten Commandments proclaim that God alone is worthy of worship. Flowing from God, the life of the community flourishes when based on honesty, trust, fidelity, and respect for life, family, and property.

A: A Reading from Exodus:

¹God spoke all these words:

²I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; ³you shall have no other gods before me.

⁴You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, ⁶but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

⁸Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work. ¹⁰But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. ¹¹For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it.

¹²Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³You shall not murder.

¹⁴You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵You shall not steal.

¹⁶You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

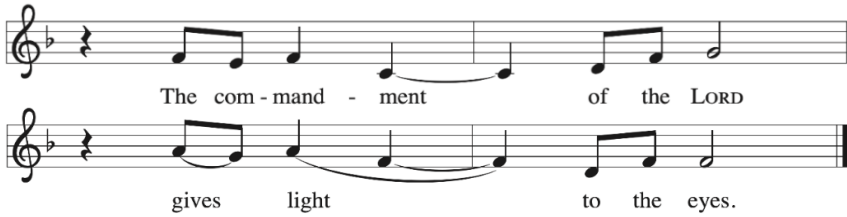
¹⁷You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

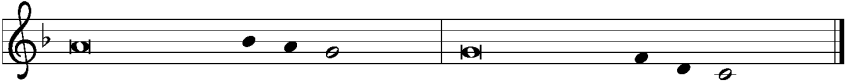
PSALM: Psalm 19

The cantor sings the refrain; the congregation repeats it.



The com - mand - ment of the LORD
gives light to the eyes.

Sung responsively between the cantor and congregation.



- ¹The heavens declare the glo- | ry of God,
and the sky proclaims its | maker's handiwork.
- ²**One day tells its tale | to another,
and one night imparts knowledge | to another.**
- ³Although they have no | words or language,
and their voices | are not heard,
- ⁴**their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the
ends | of the world,
where God has pitched a tent | for the sun.**
- ⁵It comes forth like a bridegroom out | of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to | run its course.
- ⁶**It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs
about to the end of | it again;
nothing is hidden from its | burning heat. R**
- ⁷The teaching of the LORD is perfect and re- | vives the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom to | the simple.
- ⁸**The statutes of the LORD are just and re- | joice the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is clear and gives light | to the eyes.**
- ⁹The fear of the LORD is clean and en- | dures forever;
the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous | altogether.
- ¹⁰**More to be desired are they than gold, more than | much fine gold,
sweeter far than honey, than honey | in the comb. R**
- ¹¹By them also is your ser- | vant enlightened,
and in keeping them there is | great reward.
- ¹²**Who can detect one's | own offenses?
Cleanse me from my | secret faults.**

¹³Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion | over me;
then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a | great offense.

¹⁴**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable | in your sight,
O LORD, my strength and | my redeemer. R**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

The word of the cross is pure foolishness and nonsense to the world because it claims that God is mostly revealed in weakness, humiliation, and death. But through such divine foolishness and weakness, God is working to save us. The center of Paul's preaching is Christ crucified.

A: A Reading from First Corinthians:

¹⁸The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

¹⁹For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, re - turn to the Lord, your
God, who is grac - ious and mer - ci - ful, slow to
an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

GOSPEL: John 2:13-22

Jesus attacks the commercialization of religion by driving merchants out of the temple. When challenged, he responds mysteriously, with the first prediction of his own death and resurrection. In the midst of a seemingly stable religious center, Jesus suggests that the center itself has changed.

P: The Holy Gospel according to John, the second chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. ¹⁵Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" ¹⁷His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." ¹⁸The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" ¹⁹Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" ²¹But he was speaking of the temple of his body. ²²After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON Ray Huff, ALWL

Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY

***Lord Christ, When First You Came to Earth*LBW 421**

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again 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

A brief silence is held after the introduction.

P: Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

After each petition:

P: Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

The prayers conclude:

P: Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C: Amen

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The pastor and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Peace be with you. R: Peace be with you.

Sit

MEAL

OFFERING

The Offering is received as the Lord's table is prepared.

ANTHEM

Let the Words of My Mouth.....Pepper Choplin

Stand

OFFERTORY

As the gifts are presented, the Offertory is sung

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right spir -
 it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take
 not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re-store to me the
 joy of your sal-va - tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir - it.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray:

C: Jesus, you are the bread of life
and the host of this meal.

Bless these gifts that we have gathered
that all people may know your goodness.

Feed us not only with this holy food
but with hunger for justice and peace.

We pray this in your name.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING**P:** The Lord be with you.**C:** And also with you.**P:** Lift up your hearts.**C:** We lift them to the Lord.**P:** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.**C:** It is right to give our thanks and praise.**PREFACE**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and
 might, heav - en 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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P: Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus,
your Son, who reached out
to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross,
opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread,
and gave thanks; broke it,
and gave it to his disciples,
saying: Take and eat;
this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper,
he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink,
saying: This cup is
the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people
for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,
his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us
the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills
of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood
of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you
and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory,
now and forever.

C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
 hallowed be thy name,
 thy kingdom come,
 thy will be done,
 on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses,
 as we forgive those
 who trespass against us;
 and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,
 and the power, and the glory,
 forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Bread for the journey.
 A feast for hungry hearts. Come!

C: Thanks be to God.



C 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.

Sit

COMMUNION

All baptized believers are invited to this holy meal. Those not communing are invited for a blessing. Please follow the instructions of the ushers to gather at the altar table. As the ministers give the bread and wine, they say these words to each communicant:

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.

The communicant may say: Amen

COMMUNION HYMN

***How Great Thou Art* LBW 532**

Stand

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Let Us Pray.

Generous God,

at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace.

As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread,

now make us one loaf to feed the world;

in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.

C: Amen

SENDING

BLESSING

P: Beloved,

we are God’s own people,

holy, washed, renewed.

God bless you and keep you,

shower you with mercy,

fill you with courage,

and ✠ give you peace.

C: Amen

SENDING HYMN

***O God, My Faithful God*..... LBW 504**

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Share your bread.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Ushers: Fred Harbaugh, Susan Christ, Pam Eveleth, AnnMarie Hohman, Jean Nolan, Diana Rooker; **Lay Assistant:** Susan Bryan; **Communion Assistant:** Debbie Day; **Acolyte:** Karrah Bair; **Altar Guild:** Rita Strickler, Betty Fenstermacher; **Greeters/Communion Presenters:** Gary and Connie Hess; **Cantor** Virginia Amme; **Flower Delivery:** Arch Watkins

IN BLESSED MEMORY

The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Christopher G. Solomon, Naomi and Samuel Kreger and Carl, Annalie and Kathleen Solomon by their families.

The Basket of Flowers is Given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of David L. Riley, Carol Riley and David L. Riley, Jr. by David and Emily Bausinger, Connie and Gary Hess and their families.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to Messiah Church! It is our joy to have you worship with us. If you are visiting, please make yourself known and leave your name & information to a congregation member. *We hope to see you again.*

This morning we welcome Ray Huff, an Authorized Lay Worship Leader (ALWL) of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Ray has received extensive training so as to provide worship leadership and preaching, and has been authorized by the bishop of the synod to preside at the Eucharist.

NOW IS THE TIME to put in your orders for memorial Easter Flowers. Several varieties of flowers are available. More information can be found on the order form. **PLEASE RETURN THE ORDER FORM BY SUNDAY, MARCH 17th.**

Please join us on Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. during Lent, for Lenten Vespers held in the Chapel followed by a brief Bible Study.

Messiah's Women of the ELCA will meet in the Choir Room on Tuesday, March 12, at 7:00 p.m. as we focus on celebrating St. Patrick's Day. Candy Watkins and Carol Waltz will present "**Irish Ballads**" and lead a sing-along. Becky Pryor will lead devotions; Barb Houseknecht and Susan Nadeau will provide refreshments. A special guest at our meeting will be Yvonne Shenuski, President of Church Women United of Lycoming County, who will explain CWU's "Celebrations" and its many community projects. Everyone is welcome!

I would like to thank my Messiah Family for helping me celebrate my birthday.
Martha Kropp

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH
REV. A. BRUCE AMME, PRESIDING AND PREACHING
JARED GIST, ORGANIST

324 South Howard Street | South Williamsport, PA 17702
(570) 326-9171 | www.messiahsouth.org

God's Zeal Makes Us Clean

In this penitential season, we hear the words of God's law revealed on Mount Sinai (Exodus 20:1-17). The law was given to guide Israel, newly rescued from slavery in Egypt, to become a community reflecting God's love and holiness. However, this law, no matter how full of love it is, will always carry the sting of accusation for us because our hearts have strayed from God's gracious purpose. We aren't capable of fully following the law because we are still captive to the powers of sin and death, so the commandments will always reveal our trespasses. We should not be surprised that God's word convicts even those who have been called into the community of faith. After all, Jesus cleansed even the temple, reacting against sin within the very heart of religious life.

These scenes on Mount Sinai and in the temple don't just concern people of times long past. They draw us in as well. In the mysteries of holy baptism and holy communion, we become the house of the Lord. Joined to Christ by grace, we are, together, the body of Christ and the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is zealous for the holiness of his body, desiring that those who have been united to him would walk in love and truth.

Our great assurance, though, is that the living Word of Jesus is greater even than the revelation on Sinai. Where the law can only convict, Jesus forgives. Where the law reveals our bondage to fear and pride, Jesus brings joyful freedom. In Christ, his body the church dies to sin and then, by grace, rises to new life, made clean and holy.

Let us not fear the one who calls us into holiness and cleanses the temple with zeal. The law reveals where sin has brought death to our souls. But Jesus has passed through death into a glorious resurrection to make us into a living temple, where God's mercy can be found in abundance for us and for the world.

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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