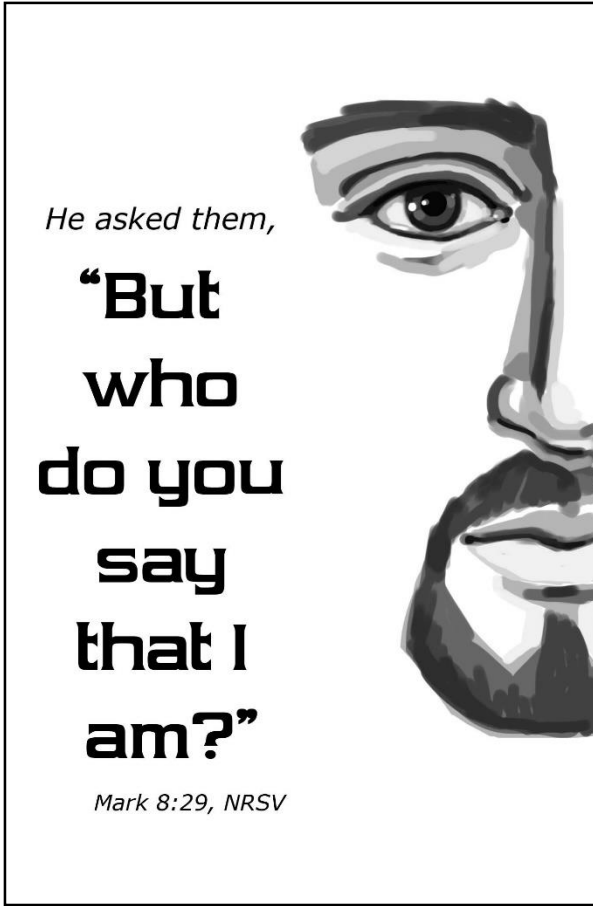


# Messiah Lutheran Church

GATHER, EMPOWER, SERVE



✠ Holy Communion ✠

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 15, 2024

**SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**



*Three weeks ago we heard Peter's confession of faith as told in John's gospel. This week we hear Mark's version, when Peter says, "You are the Messiah." In John, the stumbling block is Jesus' invitation to eat his flesh, given for the life of the world. In Mark too the scandal has to do with Jesus' words about his own coming death, and here Peter himself stumbles over Jesus' words. But Jesus is anointed (the meaning of messiah) in Mark only on the way to the cross (14:3); so we are anointed in baptism with the sign of the cross.*

**GATHERING**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE**

*Stand*

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

**P:** Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
who forgives all our sin,  
whose mercy endures forever.

**C:** Amen.

**P:** Let us confess our sin and come to God for healing.

*Kneel*

**P:** Gracious God,

**C:** have mercy on us.

**We confess that we have honored you with our lips,  
but have harmed our neighbors with our tongues.**

**The cravings at war within us  
cause conflicts and disputes.**

**In our desire to be first**

**we make distinctions among ourselves.**

**We place the needs of the poor and the suffering last.**

**In your great mercy, forgive us our sins.**

**Draw near to us with grace in time of need,  
and turn us to follow in the way of Jesus Christ,  
our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**P:** God promises to forgive our iniquity  
and to remember our sin no more.

By grace you have been saved.

In the name of † Jesus Christ,  
the source of eternal healing,  
your sins are forgiven.

**C:** Amen.

*Stand*

**GATHERING HYMN**

*Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*.....LBW 526

**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.

**CANTICLE OF PRAISE**



Glory to God in the highest, 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.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P**: Let us pray.

O God, through suffering and rejection you bring forth our salvation, and by the glory of the cross you transform our lives. Grant that for the sake of the gospel we may turn from the lure of evil, take up our cross, and follow your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C**: Amen.

*Sit*

**WORD**

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-9a**

*The image of the servant of the Lord is one of the notable motifs in the book of Isaiah. Today's reading describes the mission of the servant, whom early Christians associated with Jesus. Like Jesus, the servant does not strike back at his detractors but trusts in God's steadfast love.*

**A**: A Reading from Isaiah:

<sup>4</sup>The Lord GOD has given me  
the tongue of a teacher,  
that I may know how to sustain  
the weary with a word.  
Morning by morning he wakens—  
wakens my ear  
to listen as those who are taught.

<sup>5</sup>The Lord GOD has opened my ear,  
and I was not rebellious,  
I did not turn backward.

<sup>6</sup>I gave my back to those who struck me,  
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;  
I did not hide my face  
from insult and spitting.

<sup>7</sup>The Lord GOD helps me;  
therefore I have not been disgraced;  
therefore I have set my face like flint,  
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;  
<sup>8</sup>he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?  
Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries?

Let them confront me.

<sup>9a</sup>It is the Lord GOD who helps me;  
who will declare me guilty?

**A:** The word of the Lord.

**C:** Thanks be to God.

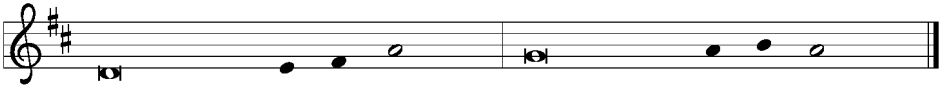
**PSALM: Psalm 116:1-9**

*The cantor sings the refrain; the congregation repeats it.*



I will walk in the pres-ence of the LORD.

*Sung responsively between the cantor and congregation.*



<sup>1</sup> I love the LORD, who has | heard my voice,  
and listened to my | supplication,

<sup>2</sup> **for the LORD has given | ear to me**  
**whenev- | er I called.**

<sup>3</sup> The cords of death entangled me; the anguish of the grave | came  
upon me;  
I came to | grief and sorrow.

<sup>4</sup> **Then I called upon the name | of the LORD:**  
**"O LORD, I pray you, | save my life." R**

<sup>5</sup> Gracious is the | LORD and righteous;  
our God is full | of compassion.

<sup>6</sup> **The LORD watches o- | ver the innocent;**  
**I was brought low, | and God saved me.**

<sup>7</sup> Turn again to your rest, | O my soul.  
for the LORD has dealt | well with you.

<sup>8</sup> **For you have rescued my | life from death,**  
**my eyes from tears, and my | feet from stumbling;**

<sup>9</sup> I will walk in the presence | of the LORD  
in the land | of the living. **R**

**SECOND READING: James 3:1-12**

*This text uses various images to illustrate how damaging and hurtful the way we speak to and about others can be. Not only are we to control our speech, but what we say and how we say it are to reflect our faith.*

**A:** A Reading from James:

<sup>1</sup>Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. <sup>2</sup>For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. <sup>3</sup>If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. <sup>4</sup>Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. <sup>5</sup>So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits.

How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! <sup>6</sup>And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. <sup>7</sup>For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, <sup>8</sup>but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. <sup>9</sup>With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. <sup>10</sup>From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. <sup>11</sup>Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? <sup>12</sup>Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

**A:** The word of the Lord.

**C:** Thanks be to God.



**BLESSING OF THE SCHOOL KITS****P**: Friends in Christ:

Today we give thanks to God and seek God's blessing as we send these LWR School Kits to various countries in need around the world.

**P**: Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe.

You made the whole earth for your glory; all creation praises you. Renew in us the commitment to use our gifts in the service of others, and especially of those in need.

Let us be your hands to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, comfort the weary, welcome the stranger, and be loving neighbors to all people. May those who receive them find them helpful in their studies and make their learning experience fulfilling and may these gifts be a sign of your love to all people. To you, O God, be glory and honor through your Son, Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, in your church and in the world, now and forever.

*Stand***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

**Cantor:** Christ suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for | the unrighteous, in order to bring | you to God.

**C**: Repeat the Alleluias

**GOSPEL: Mark 8:27-38**

*This story provides the turning point in Mark's gospel. Peter is the first human being in the narrative to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, but he cannot accept that as the Messiah Jesus will have to suffer. Moreover, Jesus issues a strong challenge to all by connecting discipleship and the cross.*

**P:** The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the eighth chapter.

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

<sup>27</sup>Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" <sup>28</sup>And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." <sup>29</sup>He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." <sup>30</sup>And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

<sup>31</sup>Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup>He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. <sup>33</sup>But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

<sup>34</sup>He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>35</sup>For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. <sup>36</sup>For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? <sup>37</sup>Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? <sup>38</sup>Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

**P:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**C:** **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Sit*  
**SERMON**.....**Ray Huff, ALWL**

*Stand*  
**HYMN OF THE DAY**  
**Lift High the Cross**..... **LBW 377**



**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:** Drawn together in the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray with confidence  
for the church, God's good creation, and all who are in need.

*After each petition:*

**P:** Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

*The prayers conclude:*

**P:** We entrust these and all our prayers to you, holy God, in the name of  
your beloved child, 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

**MEAL**

**OFFERING**

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

**ANTHEM**

***We Will Sing a Sunday Song to the Lord..... Nancy Price/Don Besig***

*Stand*

**OFFERTORY**

*As the gifts are presented, the Offertory is sung*

Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
 bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be  
 fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -  
 nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your  
 pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

**OFFERING PRAYER**

**A**: Let us pray:

**C**: **Blessed are you, O God,  
 source of every gift of your creation.  
 By these gifts and with our lives,  
 help us to serve one another and all in need,  
 through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
 Amen.**

**GREAT THANKSGIVING**

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 him 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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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'r and might,  
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -  
 san-na. 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.

**EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

**P:** Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth.  
In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son,  
that all those who believe in him should not perish,  
but have eternal life.  
We give thanks to you  
for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ.  
Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts,  
that we may receive our Lord with a living faith  
as he comes to us in his holy supper.

**C: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

**P:** 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.

**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:** Jesus welcomes you to this table.  
Come, here is your God.

**C:** Thanks be to 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.

*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**

***Let Us Break Together* ..... LBW 212**

*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:

Holy God,  
you have welcomed us to this meal  
and fed us with dignity at your table.  
Send us now to welcome others  
and to be at peace with one another,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C**: Amen

***SENDING***

**SENDING OF THE EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS**

**P**: Gracious God,  
loving all your family with a mother’s tender care:  
As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread,  
assist us in this ministry on which we are sent forth.  
In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those to whom  
we bring this sacrament, that through the body and blood of  
your Son we may all know the comfort of your abiding  
presence.

**C**: Amen

**BLESSING**

**P**: God all mighty,  
God most merciful  
✠ bless you, keep you,  
and give you peace.

**C**: Amen

**SENDING HYMN**

*O Jesus, I have Promised..... LBW 503*

**DISMISSAL**

**A**: Go in peace. Follow Jesus.

**C**: Thanks be to God.

**POSTLUDE**

## **SERVICE ASSISTANTS**

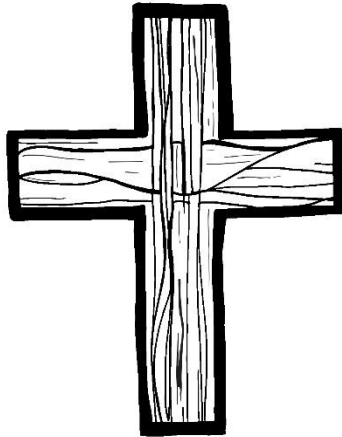
**Ushers:** Mike Larson, Brian Bair, Bill Reasner, Sally Congdon, Mike Gardner **Lay Assistant:** Kim Brofee; **Communion Assistant:** Dave Bausinger; **Acolyte:** Jordan Morris; **Altar Guild:** Vicki Bair, Doris Butt; **Greeters/Communion Presenters:** Carol Hessert, Pam Eveleth; **Cantor:** Virginia Amme; **Flower Delivery:** Charles Luppert

## **IN BLESSED MEMORY**

**The Altar Flowers** are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of James D. Wither III (Jamie) by his daughter and son-in-law, Vanessa and Brett Hollfelder and grandchildren, Ali Rudinski and Gordie Emick III.

**The Bud Vase** is given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of James D. Wither III (Jamie) on the anniversary of his birth into heaven, September 20, 2014 by his wife, Kathy; son, Sean Wither; and grandson, Jackson James Summers.

**The Sanctuary Lamp burns** in loving memory of my dad Sam Hessert for his 83 heavenly birthday, with love Pam.



## 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.

**Bible Study** will resume this Wednesday, September 18 at 7:00 pm. We will continue our study on Psalm 139. Hope to see you there.

**The Eucharistic ministers** will be sent out this morning.

**This morning we will bless the backpacks** during the worship service. Following worship, we invite anyone who is willing and able to stay after church to help pack the completed school kits into cartons for shipping. The boxed kits will then be safely stored until they are taken to the ingathering on October 19. Many hands make light work!

**Would you be interested in serving on Messiah's Congregation Council?**

If you would like to submit your name or if you want to submit a name from the congregation at large (permission from that member must be obtained before submission) please let someone from the Nominating Committee or Council know asap. Members of the Nominating Committee are: Sherri Holtzman, Larry Solomon, Sue Christ.

*Please give some prayerful thought to serving in this important role.*

**Preschool Mums Fundraiser!** The **\$10 tickets** for the mums will be available the next few Sundays after worship in the Narthex or church office. For more information, contact Linda Miller at 570-326-5405.

You will be able to take your tickets to the Potting Bench at 324 Matthews Blvd. in S. Williamsport and choose your very own 9-inch potted mum(s).

*You must pick up your mums on or before September 30. **THANK YOU for Your Support!***

**Mums for loved ones:** If anyone would like to help the preschool by donating a mum to the church, Kathy will plant the mums around the church and the office building in memory of your loved ones. If you would like the name of your loved one listed in the Messenger, please provide the information to the church office. Your donation will add to the beauty of our church – possibly for years to come! Mums that were planted last year are thriving and now grace our entrance. TIP: The earlier you bring your mum to the church to be planted, the better chance it has of becoming established and blooming again next year!

**Thank you to everyone that came to our Welcome Back Picnic,** It was a great afternoon of fellowship and entertainment.



## MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

JARED GIST, ORGANIST

324 South Howard Street | South Williamsport, PA 17702

(570) 326-9171 | [www.messiahsouth.org](http://www.messiahsouth.org)

### Falling in Line

It is never easy to think about bad things happening to the people we love. When unpleasant topics like illness or death come up, we're likely to say things like, "Oh, let's just not talk about it," or "It would never come to that!" So it is understandable that Peter scoffs when Jesus talks about his own suffering. Peter cannot fathom it. We, too, have a difficult time understanding God's ways, and like Peter, we sometimes resist when confronted with a hard truth.

However, Jesus is unfazed. There are many ways to interpret what he says in reply: Maybe it is a rebuke, calling Peter out when he got it wrong. It could be a protective statement, like a parent calling out to their small child who has run too far ahead on the street; it may sound harsh, but it is love. Or perhaps it could be Jesus calling his followers to fall in line—a call to action. "We have places to go," Jesus may be saying, "and you cannot follow from the front."

Whatever the case, Jesus points to the cross and warns of its costs. For his disciples, it will mean taking a stand against the powers of the world, perhaps even against their own families. In our baptism, we are marked with that same cross, and Jesus calls us to the same mission: to pick up our cross and follow him.

We live in a complicated world, and sometimes the path of discipleship is unclear. Sometimes we get it wrong, or get a little too far ahead, or lose our way entirely. But we trust in Jesus, our wise teacher, to lovingly correct us and set us on our way again. Through the cross, God gives us life and gives us freedom to go out, confront unpleasant truths, and do whatever we need to do for others. Nothing stands in our way.

From [sundaysandseasons.com](http://sundaysandseasons.com).

Copyright © 2022 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2006 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #24158. 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. Reprinted Hymns by permission of OneLicense.net #A-712396 and CCLI #11444333.