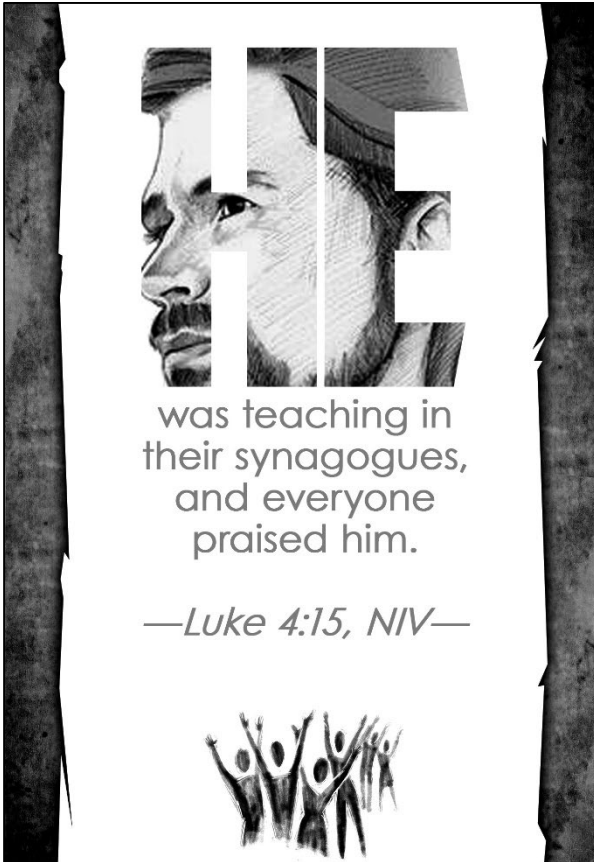


# Messiah Lutheran Church

GATHER, EMPOWER, SERVE



✠ Holy Communion ✠

Third Sunday after Epiphany

January 26, 2025



**THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**

*God's glory is revealed in the reading of scripture. People stand at attention. People weep. People prostrate themselves in prayer. The unity of the church is another reflection of God's glory. Most gloriously, the promises of God are fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Gather round. Listen up. Glimpse the glory of God.*

**GATHERING**

**PRELUDE**

*Stand*

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

**P:** Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
our creator,  
our protector,  
our wellspring of life.

**C:** Amen

**P:** Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts,  
let us confess our sin.

*Kneel*

**P:** Merciful God,

**C:** **you speak blessing and compassion into the world.**

**Forgive us for the ways we act  
with judgment, cruelty, or indifference.  
We ignore the needs of our neighbors;  
we resist your call to oppose injustice;  
we give in to scarcity and fear;  
we assume the worst about one another.**

**Cleanse us from our faults  
and release us from their grasp.  
Show us your lovingkindness.  
Restore our hearts and repair your world,  
that we may live in Christ's ways.  
Amen.**

**P:** God proclaims these words of assurance:  
"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you.  
I have called you by name. You are mine."  
In † Christ, you are forgiven.  
In the Spirit, you are made free.  
Refreshed by the waters of mercy,  
live anew as beloved children of God.

**C:** Amen

*Stand*

**GATHERING HYMN**    *O Zion, Haste*



1 O Zi - on, haste, your mis - sion high ful - fill - ing,  
 2 Pub - lish to ev - 'ry peo - ple, tongue, and na - tion  
 3 Give of your own to bear the mes - sage glo - rious,  
 4 He comes a - gain! O Zi - on, ere you meet him,



to tell to all the world that God is light;  
 that God, in whom they live and move, is love;  
 give of your wealth to speed them on their way,  
 make known to ev - 'ry heart his sav - ing grace;



that he who made all na - tions is not will - ing  
 tell how he stooped to save his lost cre - a - tion  
 pour out your soul for them in prayer vic - to - rious,  
 let none whom he has ran - somed fail to greet him,



one soul should per - ish, lost in shades of night.  
 and died on earth that we might live a - bove.  
 and haste the com - ing of the glo - rious day.  
 through your ne - glect, un - fit to see his face.

*Refrain*



Pub - lish glad tid - ings, tid - ings of peace,



tid - ings of Je - sus, re - demp - tion, and re - lease.

Text: Mary A. Thomson, 1834–1923  
 Music: ANGELIC SONGS, James Walch, 1837–1901

**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**



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



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.

Blessed Lord God, you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C**: Amen

Sit

**WORD****FIRST READING: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10**

*The exiles have returned and rebuilt Jerusalem. Now Ezra, the priest, reads the law of Moses to them in the public square. When they hear it, they weep for their sins and for the long years in exile, but Ezra reminds them that "the joy of the LORD is your strength."*

**A**: A Reading from Nehemiah:

<sup>1</sup> All the people of Israel gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel. <sup>2</sup> Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. <sup>3</sup> He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. <sup>5</sup> And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. <sup>6</sup> Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. <sup>8</sup> So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

<sup>9</sup> And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. <sup>10</sup> Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

**A**: The word of the Lord.**C**: Thanks be to God.

**PSALM: Psalm 19**

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



The teach - ing of the LORD re - vives the soul.

*Sung responsively between the cantor and congregation.*



- <sup>1</sup> The heavens declare the glo - ry of God,  
and the sky proclaims its | maker's handiwork.
- <sup>2</sup> **One day tells its tale | to another,  
and one night imparts knowledge | to another.**
- <sup>3</sup> Although they have no | words or language,  
and their voices | are not heard,
- <sup>4</sup> **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.**
- <sup>5</sup> It comes forth like a bridegroom out | of his chamber;  
it rejoices like a champion to | run its course.
- <sup>6</sup> **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**
- <sup>7</sup> The teaching of the LORD is perfect and re - | vives the soul;  
the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom | to the simple.
- <sup>8</sup> **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.**
- <sup>9</sup> The fear of the LORD is clean and en - | dures forever;  
the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous | altogether.
- <sup>10</sup> **More to be desired are they than gold, more than | much fine gold,  
sweeter far than honey, than honey | in the comb. R**
- <sup>11</sup> By them also is your ser - | vant enlightened,  
and in keeping them there is | great reward.
- <sup>12</sup> **Who can detect one's | own offenses?  
Cleanse me from my | secret faults.**
- <sup>13</sup> Above 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.
- <sup>14</sup> **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 12:12-31a**

*The apostle and pastor Paul uses the metaphor of the human body to describe how intimately connected we are in the church. For this struggling congregation in Corinth, Paul delivers a vital message of unity that is a mark of the church today.*

**A:** A Reading from First Corinthians:

<sup>12</sup> For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

<sup>14</sup> Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. <sup>15</sup> If the foot would say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup> And if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? <sup>18</sup> But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. <sup>19</sup> If all were a single member, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup> As it is, there are many members, yet one body. <sup>21</sup> The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” <sup>22</sup> On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup> and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; <sup>24</sup> whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, <sup>25</sup> that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup> If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

<sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. <sup>28</sup> And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. <sup>29</sup> Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? <sup>30</sup> Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? <sup>31a</sup> But strive for the greater gifts.

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

**C:** Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

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

**CANTOR:** The Spirit of the Lord has anointed me to bring good news | to the poor, and to proclaim release | to the captives.

**C:** Repeat the Alleluias

**GOSPEL: Luke 4:14-21**

*Near the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry, he visits his hometown of Nazareth. In the words of Isaiah, he states and claims his identity, purpose, and mission.*

**P:** The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the fourth chapter.

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

<sup>14</sup> Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. <sup>15</sup> He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

<sup>16</sup> When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, <sup>17</sup> and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

<sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,

<sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

<sup>20</sup> And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. <sup>21</sup> Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

**P:** The Gospel of the Lord

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

*Sit*

**SERMON** ..... **Pastor Amme**

*Stand*



**HYMN OF THE DAY** *Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness*

1 Praise the One who breaks the dark-ness with a lib - er - at - ing light;  
 2 Praise the One who blessed the chil - dren with a strong yet gen - tle word;  
 3 Praise the one true love in - car - nate: Christ, who suf - fered in our place;

praise the One who frees the pris - 'ners, turn - ing blind - ness in - to sight.  
 praise the One who drove out de - mons with a pierc - ing, two - edged sword.  
 Je - sus died and rose for man - y that we may know God by grace.

Praise the One who preached the gos - pel, heal - ing ev - 'ry dread dis - ease,  
 Praise the One who brings cool wa - ter to the des - ert's burn - ing sand;  
 Let us sing for joy and glad - ness, see - ing what our God has done.

calm - ing storms and feed - ing thou - sands with the ver - y bread of peace.  
 from this well comes liv - ing wa - ter quench - ing thirst in ev - 'ry land.  
 Praise the one re - deem - ing glo - ry; praise the One who makes us one.

Text: Rusty Edwards, b. 1955

Music: NETTLETON, J. Wyeth, *Repository of Sacred Music*, Part II, 1813

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**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:** With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

*After each petition:*

**P:** God of grace,

**C:** **hear our prayer.**

*The prayers conclude:*

**P:** We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people.

**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.*

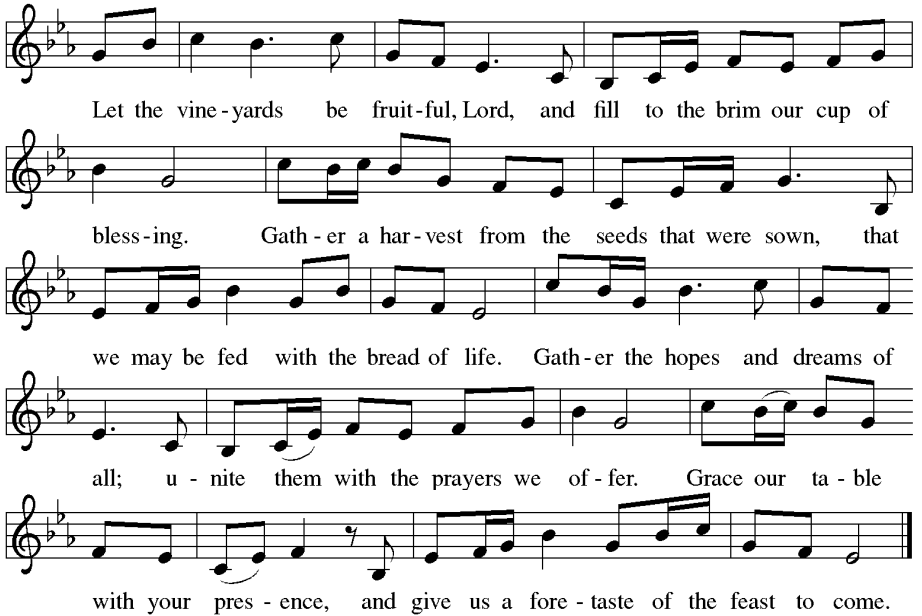
**ANTHEM**

***The Lord is My Light.....Stewart Harris***

*Stand*

**OFFERTORY**

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

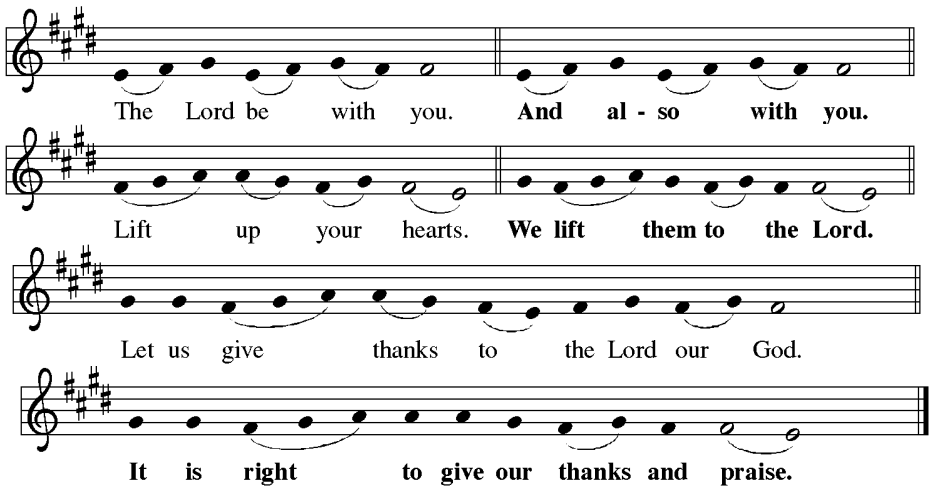


Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
 bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that  
 we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of  
 all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble  
 with your pres-ence,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

**OFFERING PRAYER**

**A**: Let us pray:

**C**: God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens,  
 and your abundance to the depths of the seas.  
 Bless what we offer to your service:  
 our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts.  
 Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity,  
 now and always.  
 Amen

**GREAT THANKSGIVING**


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

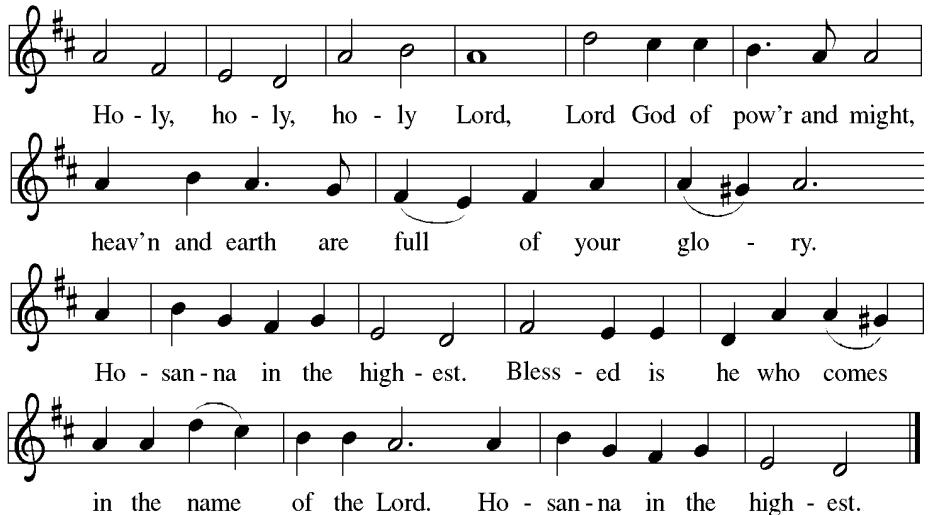
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give 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; 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, 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.

**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:** The joy of the Lord is our strength.  
Come, eat this meal of gladness.

**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, 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**

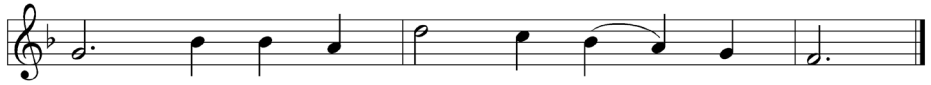
**COMMUNION HYMN**

***Lord Jesus Christ, We Humbly Pray***

1 Lord Je - sus Christ, we hum - bly pray that we may  
2 The chas - tened peace of sin for - giv'n, the fil - ial  
3 Our trem - bling hearts cleave to thy word. All thou hast  
4 One bread, one cup, one bod - y, we, u - nit - ed  
5 Lord Je - sus Christ, we hum - bly pray: oh, keep us



feast on thee to - day; be - neath these forms of bread and  
 joy of heirs of heav'n, grant as we share this won - drous  
 said thou dost af - ford; all that thou art we here re -  
 by our life in thee, thy love pro - claim till thou shalt  
 stead - fast to that day, that each may be thy wel - comed



wine en - rich us with thy grace di - vine.  
 food, thy bod - y bro - ken and thy blood.  
 ceive, and all we are to thee we give.  
 come to bring thy scat - tered loved ones home.  
 guest when thou shalt spread thy heav'n - ly feast.

Text: Henry E. Jacobs, 1844–1932

Music: GRACE CHURCH, Ignaz J. Pleyel, 1757–1831

*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.

Nourishing God,  
 at this table you have refreshed us  
 with holy gifts of food and drink.  
 Strengthen us for service,  
 and send us out to embody your good news  
 of liberation and healing for the sake of the world.  
 In the name of Christ, we pray,

**C: Amen**

### ***SENDING***

### **BLESSING**

**P:** The Spirit of the triune God  
 † bless you with joy,  
 anoint you with compassion,  
 and send you in love.

**C: Amen**

**SENDING HYMN**    *The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve*

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.

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939

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

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**DISMISSAL**

**A**: Go in peace. Live in hope.

**C**: Thanks be to God.

**POSTLUDE**



### SERVICE ASSISTANTS

**Ushers:** Mike Larson, Brian Bair, Al Cole, Sally Congdon, Kim Brofee  
**Lay Assistant:** Anita Bair; **Communion Assistant:** Candy Watkins  
**Acolyte:** Doriann Morris; **Altar Guild:** Sue Shoemaker, Yvonne Kaiser  
**Greeters/Communion Presenters:** Carol Hessert, Pam Eveleth  
**Cantor:** Dave Bausinger; **Flower Delivery:** Susan Bryan

### IN BLESSED MEMORY

**The Altar Flowers** are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Luke Haefner on the anniversary of his 34<sup>th</sup> birthday, January 25, by his mother, Patti, his brother, John and his sister-in-law, Jennifer and nephew James.

**The Basket of Flowers** is given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Francis A. Gephart, Jr. by his family.

### 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.*

**Join us for Bible Study and Fellowship** on Wednesdays at 6:30. *All are Welcome!*

**It is time that we cover more flower cans.** I have the wallpaper cut; all I need are several volunteers. If you are interested, please contact the church office with days of the week and times that you would be available. Then we can set one or two days that fit the greatest number of individual's schedules. Thank you, Chuck Luppert

**Help Wanted: Snow Removal** ~ Help is needed to clear the walks around the church property after it snows. Position requires dependability and the flexibility to be available within a reasonable period of time following a snow/ice event. This is a paid position - **\$20/hour**. If you or someone you know is able to help, please contact the church office.

#### **February 9 - Souper Bowl of Caring**

**This marks the 35<sup>th</sup> Year of the Souper Bowl of Caring** - As has been our tradition, we will be collecting donations of non-perishable food items to stock our food pantry for the rest of the winter. From Sunday, January 26 through February 9, you may place your donations in the bin marked with the team you are rooting for in the Super Bowl. Whose team will win? This is a fun way to help us win the fight against hunger in our community. *Look at the insert from the Messenger for the listing of the food items we collect, or visit our web site to download the list:*

<https://messiahsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Food-Pantry-List-of-Needed-Items-1.pdf>

**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](http://www.messiahsouth.org)

**Praised by Everyone**

Jesus' ministry began in triumph. He had endured the testing in the wilderness and emerged victorious, ready to begin his good work in the community. One of the first places he stopped was in the synagogues, teaching in such a way that he "was praised by everyone" (Luke 4:15). One day, upon reading from Isaiah, Jesus revealed himself as the one who would bring good news to the poor, proclaim release to the captives, recover the sight of people who were blind, free those who were oppressed, and proclaim the Lord's favor. Alleluia!

As followers of this very same Jesus, we know that God is still at work accomplishing these glorious tasks in our communities. We also know people who long for us, Jesus' followers full of the Holy Spirit, to bring good news to the poor.

How are we, members of the body of Christ, called to be in such a deep relationship with our neighbors that they share with us their greatest needs? Have we established such profound trust that they are willing to allow us to accompany them as God produces solutions sufficient to their greatest crises?

We have the most exhilarating mission—to proclaim the Lord's favor in the neighborhood! We get to remind people that they are not forgotten. How we do this in our own contexts is as various as the number of churches represented around the world. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to Christian ministry. But in all cases, we are called to invite everyone to praise Jesus and live into his mission of freedom.

As we gather each week for word and sacrament, may we be filled with the Holy Spirit as we pray that Jesus' fame will spread into "all the surrounding country" (Luke 4:14), as our neighbors experience God's good work through each of us. Holy Spirit, reveal to us new ways to accompany our neighbors in this Epiphany season.

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