

Messiah Lutheran Church

GATHER, EMPOWER, SERVE



✠ Holy Communion ✠

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

February 16, 2025

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY



Blessings and curses abound on the sixth Sunday after Epiphany. We would do well to listen closely to whom the "blessed are" and the "woe tos" are directed and to find our place in the crowd among those who desire to touch Jesus. The risen Christ stands among us in the mystery of the holy supper with an invitation to live in him, and offers power to heal us all.

GATHERING

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: God of all mercy and consolation,
come to the help of your people,
turning us from our sin,
to live for you alone.

Give us the power of your Holy Spirit
that we may confess our sin,
receive your forgiveness,
and grow into the fullness of
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Kneel

P: Most merciful God,

**C: we confess that we are captive to sin
and cannot free ourselves.**

**We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us.**

**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,
so that we may delight in your will
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your holy name.**

Amen

P: In the mercy of almighty God,
 Jesus Christ was given to die for us,
 and for his sake
 God forgives us for all our sins.
 As a called and ordained minister
 of the church of Christ, and by his authority,
 I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins,
 in the name of the Father,
 and of the † Son,
 and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

Stand

GATHERING HYMN

He Leadeth Me; Oh, Blessed ThoughtLBW 501



1 He lead-eth me: oh, bless-ed thought! Oh, words with heav'n-ly com-fort fraught!
 2 Some-times mid scenes of deep-est gloom, some-times where E - den's bow-ers bloom,
 3 Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine, nor ev - er mur - mur nor re - pine;
 4 And when my task on earth is done, when by thy grace the vic-t'ry's won,



What-e'er I do, wher-e'er I be, still 'tis God's hand that lead-eth me.
 by wa - ters calm, o'er trou-bled sea, still 'tis God's hand that lead-eth me.
 con - tent, what-ev - er lot I see, since 'tis my God that lead-eth me.
 e'en death's cold wave I will not flee, since God through Jor - dan lead-eth me.

Refrain



He lead-eth me, he lead-eth me, by his own hand he lead-eth me.



His faith-ful fol-l'wer I would be, for by his hand he lead-eth me.

Text: Joseph H. Gilmore, 1834–1918
 Music: HE LEADETH ME, William B. Bradbury, 1815–1868

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

Living God, in Christ you make all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

Sit

WORD

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 17:5-10

Through a vision in the temple, the eighth-century prophet Isaiah is called by God to announce judgment against Israel. Aware of his sinfulness and shortcomings, Isaiah is initially hesitant. But when God calls, Isaiah responds, "Here am I; send me!"

A: A Reading from Jeremiah:

⁵ Thus says the LORD:

Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals
and make mere flesh their strength,
whose hearts turn away from the LORD.

⁶ They shall be like a shrub in the desert,
and shall not see when relief comes.

They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness,
in an uninhabited salt land.

⁷ Blessed are those who trust in the LORD,
whose trust is the LORD.

⁸ They shall be like a tree planted by water,
sending out its roots by the stream.

It shall not fear when heat comes,
and its leaves shall stay green;
in the year of drought it is not anxious,
and it does not cease to bear fruit.

⁹ The heart is devious above all else;
it is perverse—
who can understand it?

¹⁰ I the LORD test the mind
and search the heart,
to give to all according to their ways,
according to the fruit of their doings.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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

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

CANTOR: Rejoice, and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven.

C: Repeat the Alleluias.

GOSPEL: Luke 6:17-26

After choosing his twelve apostles, Jesus teaches a crowd of followers about the nature and demands of discipleship. He begins his great sermon with surprising statements about who is truly blessed in the eyes of God.

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

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁷ Jesus came down with the twelve and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon.¹⁸ They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. ¹⁹ And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

²⁰ Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ “Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be filled.

“Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

²² “Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. ²³ Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

²⁴ “But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.

²⁵ “Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.

“Woe to you who are laughing now,
for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶ “Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their
ancestors did to the false prophets.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON **Pastor Amme**

Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY

Precious Lord, Take My Hand..... **WOV 731**

1. Precious Lord, take my hand,
Lead me on, let me stand;
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.
Through the storm, through the night,
Lead me on to the light.
Take my hand, precious Lord; Lead me home.

2. When my way grows drear,
Precious Lord, linger near,
When my life is almost gone,
Hear my cry, hear my call;
Hold my hand lest I fall.
Take my hand, precious Lord; Lead me home.

3. When the darkness appears
And the night draws near,
And the day is almost gone,
At the river I stand;
Guide my feet, hold my hand,
Take my hand, precious Lord; Lead me home.

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

Shine, Jesus, Shine..... Graham Kendrick

Stand

OFFERTORY

As the gifts are presented, the Offertory is sung

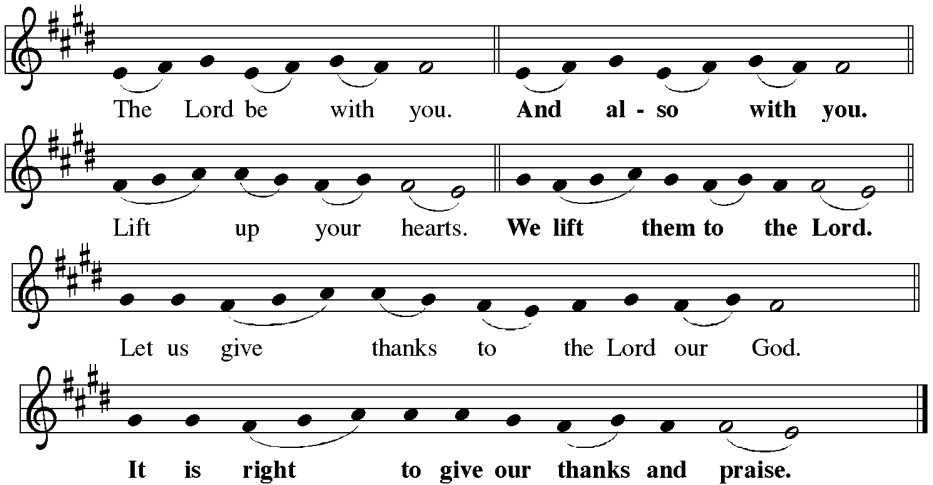
Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
 bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that
 we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of
 all; u - nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta - ble
 with your pres - ence, and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

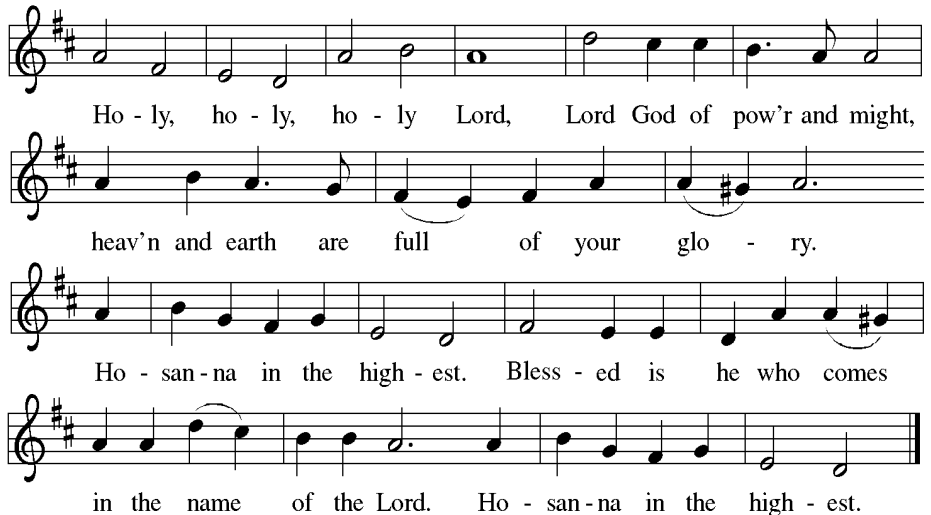
GREAT THANKSGIVING



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: 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.

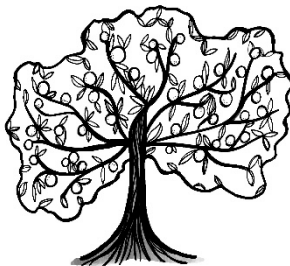
In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples,
saying: Take and eat;
this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

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: Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

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

Jesus, the Very Thought of you.....LBW 316

1 Je - sus, the ver - y thought of you fills us with sweet de - light;
 2 No voice can sing, no heart can frame, nor can the mind re - call
 3 O Hope of ev - 'ry con - trite soul, O Joy of all the meek,
 4 O Je - sus, be our joy to - day; help us to prize your love;

but sweet-er far your face to view and rest with - in your light.
 a sweet-er sound than your blest name, O Sav - ior of us all!
 how kind you are to those who fall! How good to those who seek!
 grant us at last to hear you say: "Come, share my home a - bove."

Text: attr. Bernard of Clairvaux, 1091–1153; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814–1878
 Music: ST. AGNES, John B. Dykes, 1823–1876

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 Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you peace.

C: Amen

SENDING HYMN

Set Forth by God's Blessing.....LBW 221

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Live in hope.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Ushers: Carl Gee, Jody Fullmer, Dave and Rita Strickler, Jimmy Gardner

Lay Assistant: Carola Storrs; **Communion Assistant:** Mary Schultz

Acolyte: Brennen Hess; **Altar Guild:** Marie Welter, April Gardner

Greeters/Communion Presenters: Michael and April Gardner

Cantor: Janet Stroble; **Flower Delivery:** Jody Fullmer

IN BLESSED MEMORY

The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God and in honor of Martha Kropp’s 96th birthday on February 22nd by her son Craig Kropp.

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 our family and friends who came to join us for worship on this morning. Immediately following worship, we will meet in Shaheen Hall for a soup and sandwich luncheon along with some great conversation and getting to know our neighbors, this is hosted by the Fellowship Committee.

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

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.

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

REV. A. BRUCE AMME, PRESIDING AND PREACHING

JARED GIST, ORGANIST

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(570) 326-9171 | www.messiahsouth.org

Abundance of Blessing

Poverty is not a virtue. It is a curse of our fallen world that will finally be undone when God's reign comes in its fullness. When hunger or homelessness is relieved in this life, it is a foretaste of that great day. Similarly, being hated, especially for the sake of Jesus, is not a goal for which we should strive. Why, then, does Jesus call those who are poor and reviled "blessed"?

The ancient prophet Jeremiah helps us understand Jesus' words. "Cursed are those who . . . make mere flesh their strength. . . Blessed are those who trust in the LORD" (Jeremiah 17:5, 7). "Flesh" refers here not to our bodies but, rather, to human strength and capability, apart from God. In themselves, wealth, sufficient food, pleasures that bring laughter, and a positive reputation can be good. The problem comes when we base our security, hope, or sense of purpose on them. These good things then become idols. They become "flesh," displacing God from our hearts. Flesh cannot bear that burden, though, and will inevitably fail us. Jesus' words of blessing and woe are not a moral program or an ethical checklist, but shocking pronouncements meant to startle us out of our fixation on human capacities.

Jesus' beatitudes open us to the reality that Jeremiah declared: true blessing comes when we "trust in the LORD." We can risk human rejection, knowing that in baptism, we have been claimed eternally by God. If we are poor, God's word promises that we are treasured by the One who gave up everything for us. When we feel content with earthly food, at the Lord's table we discover that true delight comes from never-ending love present in simple bread and wine. When the song and prayer of the church give voice to lamentation, we find consolation and hope even in our tears.

Woe to us indeed if we allow ourselves to settle for mere human strength, when God's mercy and goodness are so much greater! In the word of the cross and the sacraments of grace, power comes forth from Jesus with blessing, strength, and joy forevermore.

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