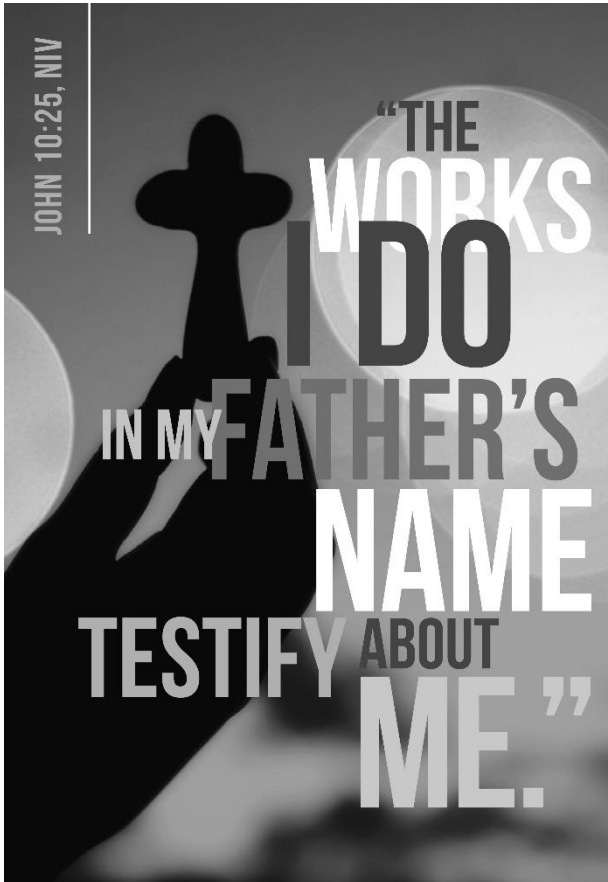


Messiah Lutheran Church

GATHER, EMPOWER, SERVE



✝ Holy Communion ✝

Fourth Sunday of Easter

May 11, 2025



FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

The gift of new life, of eternal life, is the gift of the risen Christ. It is the promise of Jesus. It was true for Dorcas in Joppa. It was true for those "who have come out of the great ordeal" in the Revelation vision. It is true for us and for all the baptized: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Stand

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C: Christ is risen, indeed. Alleluia!

P: In the name of ✠ the One
who was, who is, and who is to come.

C: Amen

P: Baptized into Christ's death and resurrection,
and called to live the baptized life,
let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

P: Holy God,
we give you thanks for the waters of baptism,
waters that make a people your own,
that restore to wholeness,
and empower us to be witnesses in your name.
Baptized into you, O Living One,

C: make us one as you are one.

P: We give you thanks for the waters of baptism,
waters that strengthen believers
and give new life to beloved servants of your church;
waters that extend your boundless love
and cross barriers of our own making.
Baptized into you, O Living One,

C: make us one as you are one.

P: We give you thanks for the waters of baptism,
waters that open the hearts of believers
and give a voice in the night to those in captivity;
waters that set your people on a new path,
rejoicing in the Spirit's power.
Baptized into you, O Living One,

C: make us one as you are one.

P: Grant us grace, love, and life, O Living One,
that our every day is shaped by these waters
that give us our very lives in you.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Crucified and Risen One.

C: Amen

GATHERING HYMN

Christ the Lord Is Risen Today, Alleluia!LBW 128

1 Christ the Lord is ris'n to - day; Al - le - lu - ia!
 2 For the sheep the Lamb has bled, Al - le - lu - ia!
 3 Christ, the vic - tim un - de - filed, Al - le - lu - ia!
 4 Chris - tians, on this ho - ly day, Al - le - lu - ia!

Chris - tians, has - ten on your way; Al - le - lu - ia!
 sin - less in the sin - ner's stead. Al - le - lu - ia!
 God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled, Al - le - lu - ia!
 all your grate - ful hom - age pay; Al - le - lu - ia!

of - fer praise with love re - plete, Al - le - lu - ia!
 Christ the Lord is ris'n on high; Al - le - lu - ia!
 when con - tend - ing death and life; Al - le - lu - ia!
 Christ the Lord is ris'n on high; Al - le - lu - ia!

at the pas - chal vic - tim's feet. Al - le - lu - ia!
 now he lives, no more to die. Al - le - lu - ia!
 met in strange and awe - some strife. Al - le - lu - ia!
 now he lives, no more to die. Al - le - lu - ia!

APOSTOLIC GREETING**P:** Alleluia! Christ is risen!**C:** He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**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****A** This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.**C** Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us

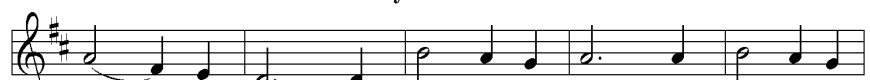
free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless - ing and glo - ry are his.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.



Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



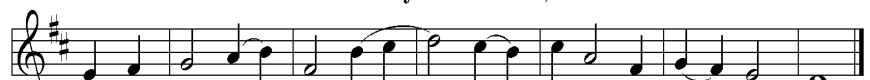
hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY**P:** Let us pray.

O God of peace, you brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great shepherd of the sheep. By the blood of your eternal covenant, make us complete in everything good that we may do your will, and work among us all that is well-pleasing in your sight, 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: Acts 9:36-43**

Dorcas was a faithful and devoted woman of charity in the community of Joppa. Her kindness and her work with clothing were well-known, especially to the widows in town. When she fell ill and died, Peter raised her back to life through the power of prayer.

A: A Reading from Acts:

³⁶ Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. ³⁷ At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. ³⁸ Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay." ³⁹ So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. ⁴⁰ Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹ He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. ⁴² This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³ Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

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

PSALM 23 *The Lord Will Be My Shepherd**Sung by the choir*

The Lord will be my shepherd, He knows my ev'ry need.
He renews my faith each morning with the promise of His peace.
As I rest in a quiet meadow, or beside a clear blue stream,
the Lord will be my shepherd, I will follow where He leads.
Though the shadows of darkness surround me, I will never be afraid,
for I know the Lord will protect me from the dangers I must face.
When there's anger or trouble around me, and I want to run and hide,
I will find Him near to calm my fear, always at my side.
The Lord will be my shepherd wherever I may go.
He will fill me with His kindness, He will strengthen me with hope.
When my day at last is over, He will come and take me home.
The Lord will be my shepherd, I will never be alone.

Copyright © 1990, Harold Flammer Music, Words by Nancy Price and Don Besig
Shawnee Press, Inc., Delaware Water Gap, Pa 18327

SECOND READING: Revelation 7:9-17

Christ is the shepherd who leads his faithful to springs of the water of life. Christ is also the lamb who vanquishes sin and suffering.

A: A Reading from Revelation:

⁹ After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰ They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

¹¹ And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² singing,

"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honor
and power and might
be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

¹³ Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" ¹⁴ I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵ For this reason they are before the throne of God,
and worship him day and night within his temple,

and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.

¹⁶ They will hunger no more, and thirst no more;
the sun will not strike them,
nor any scorching heat;

¹⁷ for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of the water of life,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

A: The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Cantor: Jesus says, I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me.

C: Repeat the Alleluias

GOSPEL: John 10:22-30

Jesus responds to questions about his identity with the remarkable claim that he and the Father are one. Those who understand this are his sheep; they hear his voice, follow, and will never be snatched from his hand.

P The Holy Gospel according to John, the tenth chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

²² At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. ²⁴ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.” ²⁵ Jesus answered, “I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name testify to me; ²⁶ but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and

they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ The Father and I are one."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.
C Praise to you, O Christ.

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

Stand
HYMN OF THE DAY
The Lord's My Shepherd.....**LBW 451**



1 The Lord's my shep-herd; I'll not want. He makes me down to lie
2 My soul he doth re-store a-gain, and me to walk doth make
3 Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale, yet will I fear no ill;
4 My ta-ble thou hast fur-nish-ed in pres-ence of my foes;
5 Good-ness and mer-cy all my life shall sure-ly fol-low me,

in pas-tures green; he lead-eth me the qui-et wa-ters by.
with-in the paths of righ-teous-ness, e'en for his own name's sake;
for thou art with me, and thy rod and staff me com-fort still;
my head thou dost with oil a-noint, and my cup o-ver-flows.
and in God's house for-ev-er-more my dwell-ing-place shall be;

He lead-eth me, he lead-eth me the qui-et wa-ters by.
with-in the paths of righ-teous-ness, e'en for his own name's sake.
for thou art with me, and thy rod and staff me com-fort still.
My head thou dost with oil a-noint, and my cup o-ver-flows.
and in God's house for-ev-er-more my dwell-ing-place shall be.

Text: *Psalter*, Edinburgh, 1650
Music: BROTHER JAMES' AIR, J. L. Macbeth Bain, c. 1840–1925; arr. Gordon Jacob, 1895–1984
Arr. © Oxford University Press

NICENE CREED

C We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living
and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped
and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A brief silence is held after the introduction.

P: God of resurrection and new life, we come before you in prayer for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

After each petition:

P: Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

The prayers conclude:

P: We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen 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

***Like A Shepherd* Mark Weston**

Stand

OFFERTORY

As the gifts are presented, the Offertory is sung

**C: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

OFFERING PRAYER**A:** Let us pray:**C:** Risen One,

you have gathered us around your table of grace
along with these gifts we bring.

Come among us again,

breathe your life into us,

and enliven us with this meal,

that we may live as your risen body in the world.

Amen

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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

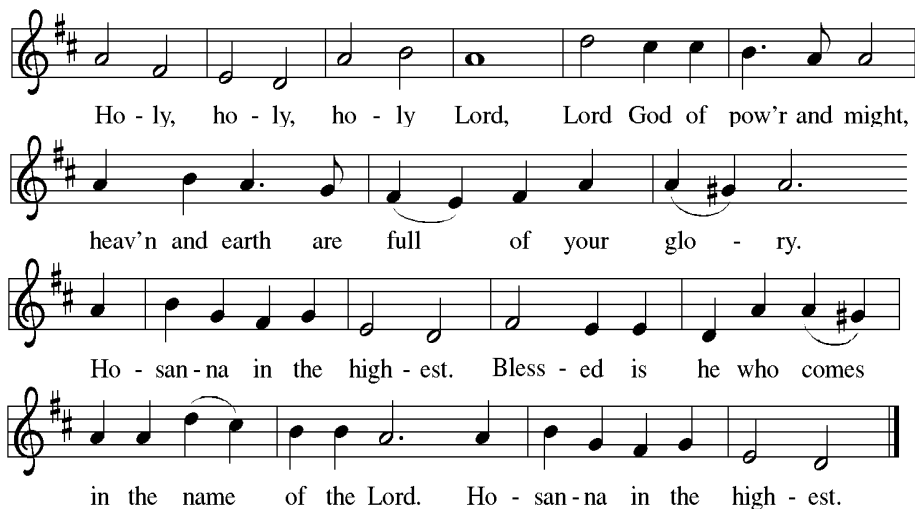
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

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 offer thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, the true Paschal lamb who gave himself to take away our sin, who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life. And so with Mary Magdalene and Peter, and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, 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.

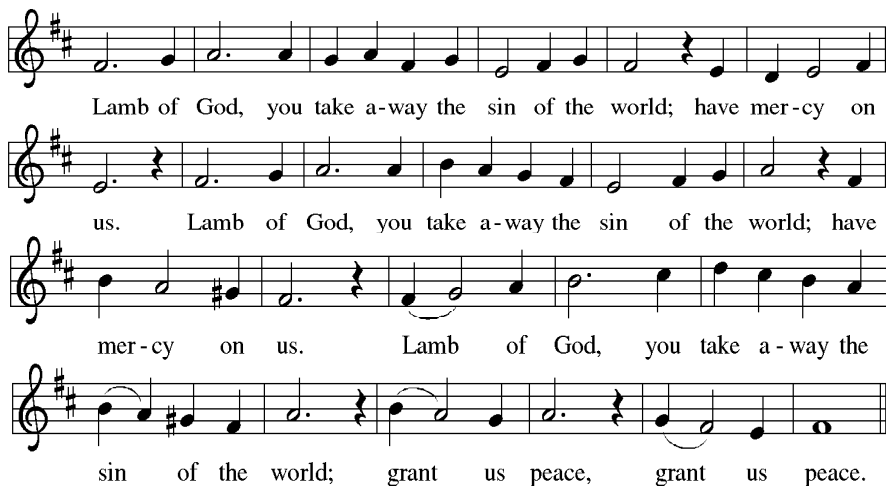
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Come to the table of grace. Receive the gift of new life.

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

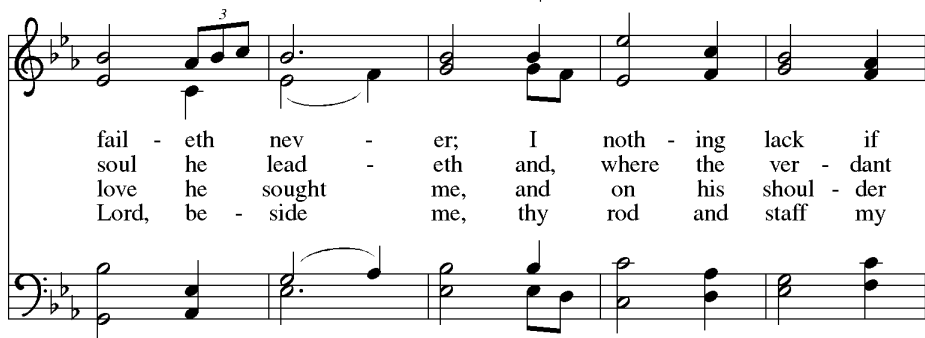
All baptized believers are invited to this holy meal. Those not communing are invited for a blessing. Please follow the instructions of the ushers to gather at the altar table. As the ministers give the bread and wine, they say these words to each communicant:

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

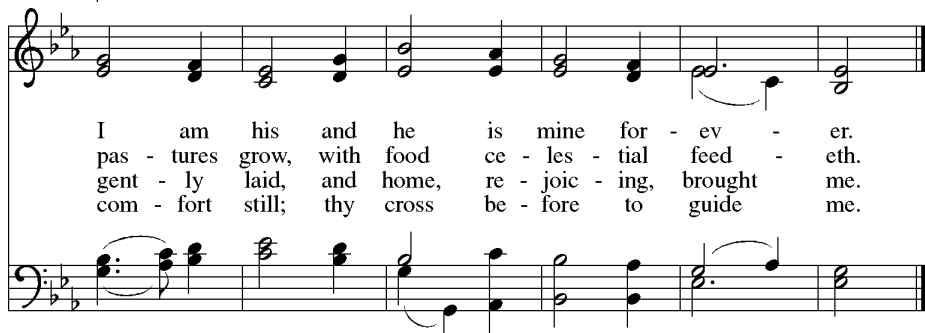
The communicant may say: Amen

COMMUNION HYMN


1 The King of love my shep - herd is, whose good - ness
2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, my ran - somed
3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, but yet in
4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill, with thee, dear



fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if
soul he lead - eth and, where the ver - dant
love he sought me, on his shoul - der
Lord, be - side me, thy rod and staff my



I am his and he is mine for - ev - er.
pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.
gent - ly laid, and home, re - joic - ing, brought me.
com - fort still; thy cross be - fore to guide me.

5 Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
thine unction grace bestoweth;
and, oh, what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!

6 And so, through all the length of days,
thy goodness faileth never.
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
within thy house forever.

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.

A: Living One,
in this feast you have made yourself known to us.
Send us now to tell of your wonders,
sing of your glory,
and proclaim your risen life
to a wounded and weary world.

C: Amen

SENDING

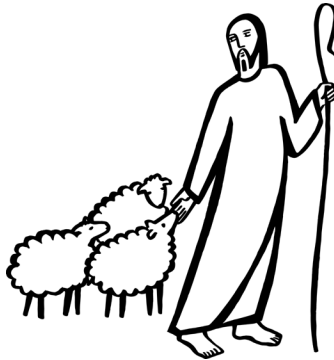
BLESSING

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

P: The triune God,
who was, who is, and who is to come,
Sovereign, ☩ Savior, and Spirit,
light your way with resurrection dawn,
now and always.

C: Amen



SENDING HYMN

Praise the Lord, Rise Up Rejoicing.....LBW 196



1 Praise the Lord, rise up re - joic - ing, wor - ship, thanks, de -
2 Scat - tered flock, one shep - herd shar - ing, lost and lone - ly,
3 Sins for - giv - en, wrongs for - giv - ing, we go forth a -



vo - tion voic - ing: glo - ry be to God on high!
one voice hear - ing, ears at - ten - tive to your word;
lert and liv - ing in your Spir - it, strong and free.



Christ, your cross and pas - sion shar - ing, by this eu - cha -
by your blood new life re - ceiv - ing, in your bod - y,
Part - ners in your new cre - a - tion, seek - ing peace in



rist de - clar - ing yours the fi - nal vic - to - ry.
firm be - liev - ing, we are yours, and you the Lord.
ev - 'ry na - tion, may we faith - ful fol - l'wers be.

Text: Howard C. A. Gaunt, 1902–1983, alt.
Music: ALLES IST AN GOTTES SEGEN, Johann Löhner, 1645–1705, adapt.
Text © Oxford University Press.

DISMISSAL

- A**: Alleluia! Christ is risen.
- C**: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!
Go in peace. In Christ you are made new. Alleluia! Alleluia!
- C**: Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

POSTLUDE

SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Ushers: Mike Larson, Brian Bair, Al Cole, Sally Congdon, Kim Brofee
Lay Assistant: Carola Storrs; **Communion Assistant:** Candy Watkins
Acolyte: Jonathan Hess **Altar Guild:** Rita Strickler, Carol Winter
Greeters/Presenters: Yvonne Kaiser, Rhonda Koch
Cantor: Janet Stroble; **Flower Delivery:** Jody Fullmer

IN BLESSED MEMORY

The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of loved ones.

The Basket of Flowers is given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Percy Batey and Gladys Reigel Batey, by the Steiner, McCracken and Packard 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.*

Eucharistic Ministers will be sent out Sunday, May 18th

Please join us on Wednesday evenings for Bible Study and fellowship at 6:30 p.m.

Messiah Preschool will celebrate their 50th year, and a celebration will take place May 18th immediately following worship in the Narthex.

Lutheran World Relief School Kits **"Sew-A-Sack"** ~ PART TWO!
Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday, May 12-13-14, 2025 ~ 9:00 a.m.-???

In addition to wearing red on Pentecost Sunday, Messiah will be decorating the chancel with red geraniums. If you would like to sponsor a geranium, please submit the order form to the church office by June 4th. Those who order geraniums may pick them up immediately after the Worship Service on Pentecost, Sunday, June 8th, or on Monday, June 9th. Call the church office at (570) 326-9171 if you have any questions.

This year's VBS will be held June 23rd - 27th. Volunteers will be needed if you are available all week or just on certain days, please call Kathryn Pratt, 570-244-6964. Please start saving your toilet paper rolls and 16 oz. Whipped Topping or margarine containers and lids. Thank you, Kathryn.

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

All Your Answers Questioned

Some years ago, a class from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago had T-shirts made with the slogan “LSTC: The place to get all your answers questioned.” What does it mean to advocate questioning at a seminary? Shouldn’t the church train leaders to provide answers? It is a common assumption that we achieve right faith by coming to a correct interpretation of divine things. Indeed, many people of faith are ready and willing to provide that correct interpretation. But faith is more than a set of propositions. It is a relationship of trust with the living Lord.

For his part, Jesus tends to resist easy answers. “How long will you keep us in suspense?” his interrogators ask in today’s gospel reading from John. “If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly” (10:24). But Jesus’ reply is hardly straightforward: “I have told you, and you do not believe, . . . because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me” (10:25-27).

We may crave clarity, but faith is not always clear-cut. It is filled with subtlety, ambiguity, tension. Even as God desires abundant life for us, God also calls us to lay down our lives for each other. The gospel encompasses both suffering and hope, death and new life. The Son of Man comes not to be served but to serve, to shepherd.

These truths are hard to “tell plainly.” That is not to say we should not seek understanding in the life of faith. But faith also means having our answers questioned, allowing God to renew our minds for the sake of our relationship with Christ who claims us for himself. After all, the gift and challenge of discipleship is not to come to indisputable conclusions about God, but to follow our Shepherd on the way.

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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