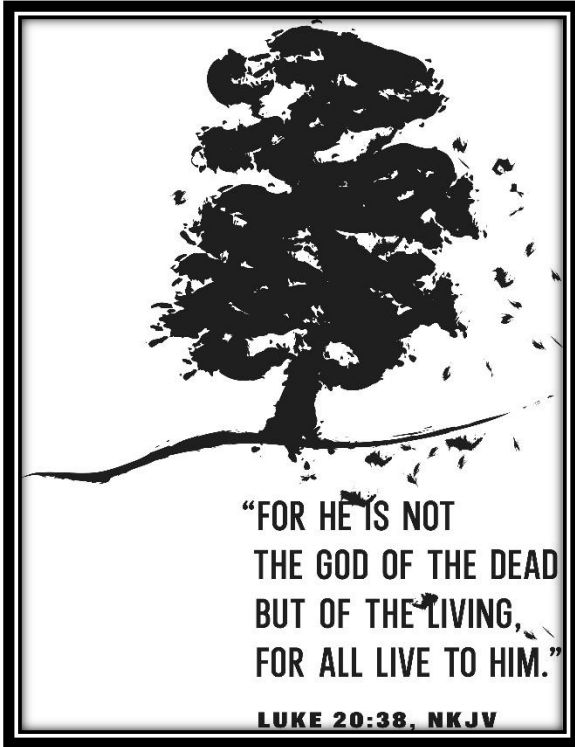


Messiah Lutheran Church

GATHER, EMPOWER, SERVE



✝ Holy Communion ✝

22nd Sunday after Pentecost

November 9, 2025

22ND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



We worship on the first day of the week because Jesus was raised on that day. Every Sunday is a little Easter. This Sunday feels more like Easter than many as the appointed texts celebrate the reality of the resurrection. Live it up this Lord's day. Our God is the God of the living.

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

Kneel

[P]: Faithful God,

[C]: you have shown us the ways of your heart,
yet we stray from your paths.
We are stuck in sinful systems of oppression
and do not embrace the freedom
of your faithful promises.
We ignore our neighbors.
We exploit the earth.
We reject your abundance,
trusting our impulses instead of your steadfast love.
Repair our relationships,
restore what we have broken,
renew our hearts,
and bring us to new life.
Amen

[P]: Hear the good news:
God the Faithful One loves you,
✠ in Christ Jesus your sins are forgiven,
and by the power of the Holy Spirit you are set free.

[C]: Amen

Stand

GATHERING HYMN *In Thee Is Gladness***LBW 552**

1 In thee is glad-ness a-mid all sad-ness, Je-sus, sun-shine of my heart.
 2 If he is ours, . . . we fear no pow-ers, not of earth or sin or death.



By thee are giv-en the gifts of heav-en, thou the true re-deem-er art.
 He sees and bless-es in worst dis-tress-es; he can change them with a breath.



Our souls thou wak-est; our bonds thou break-est. Who trusts thee sure-ly
 Where-fore the sto-ry tell of his glo-ry with heart and voic-es;



has built se-cure-ly and stands for-ev-er: Al-le-lu-ia!
 all heav'n re-joice in him for-ev-er: Al-le-lu-ia!



Our hearts are pin-ing to see thy shin-ing, dy-ing or liv-ing,
 We shout for glad-ness, tri-umph o'er sad-ness, love him and praise him



to thee are cleav-ing; naught us can sev-er: Al-le-lu-ia!
 and still shall raise him glad hymns for-ev-er: Al-le-lu-ia!

Text: Johann Lindemann, 1549–c. 1631; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1829–1878, alt.

Music: IN DIR IST FREUDE, Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, c. 1556–1622

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.

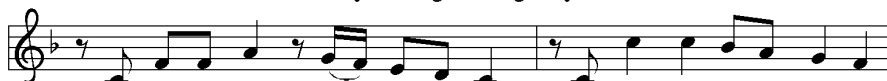
G: And also with you.

CANTICLE

Glory to God in the highest, 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.

O God, our eternal redeemer, by the presence of your Spirit you renew and direct our hearts. Keep always in our mind the end of all things and the day of judgment. Inspire us for a holy life here, and bring us to the joy of the resurrection, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

G: Amen

Sit

WORD**FIRST READING: Job 19:23-27a**

Job suffers the loss of children, wealth, and health. Accused by his companions of wrongdoing, he knows himself to be innocent. Here, in the midst of his suffering, Job clings to the radical hope that his vindicator, his redeemer, lives; and that one day he himself will see God.

A: A Reading from Job:

23 "O that my words were written down!

O that they were inscribed in a book!

24 O that with an iron pen and with lead

they were engraved on a rock forever!

25 For I know that my vindicator lives

and that in the end he will stand upon the earth;

26 and after my skin has been destroyed,

then in my flesh I shall see God,
 27a whom I shall see on my side,
 and my eyes shall behold, and not another."

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 17:1-9

The cantor sings the refrain; the congregation repeats it.

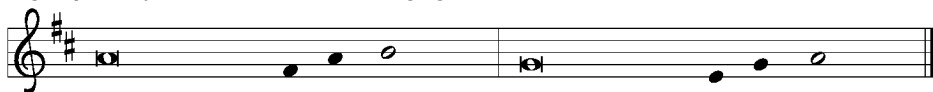


Keep me as the ap - ple of your eye;



hide me un - der the shad - ow of your wings.

Sung responsively between the cantor and congregation.



- ¹ Hear a just cause, O LORD; give heed | to my cry;
listen to my prayer, which does not come from | lying lips.
- ² **Let my vindication come forth | from your presence;**
let your eyes be | fixed on justice.
- ³ Examine my heart, visit | me by night,
melt me down; you will find no impuri- | ty in me.
- ⁴ **I have not regarded what | others do;**
at the word of your lips I have avoided the ways | of the violent. R
- ⁵ My footsteps hold fast to your | well-worn path;
and my feet | do not slip.
- ⁶ **I call upon you, O God, for you will | answer me;**
incline your ear to me and | hear my words.
- ⁷ Show me your marvelous | lovingkindness,
O Savior of those who take refuge at your right hand from those
who | rise against them.
- ⁸ **Keep me as the apple | of your eye;**
hide me under the shadow | of your wings,
- ⁹ from the wicked | who assault me,
from my deadly enemies | who surround me. R

SECOND READING: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17

This portion of the letter provides encouragement for the church at Thessalonica during a time of confusion and opposition, as some allowed their concern over Jesus' imminent return to divert them from the central teachings of the gospel.

A: A Reading from Second Thessalonians:

¹ As to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we beg you, brothers and sisters, ² not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as though from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here. ³ Let no one deceive you in any way, for that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the lawless one is revealed, the one destined for destruction. ⁴ He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, declaring himself to be God. ⁵ Do you not remember that I told you these things when I was still with you?

¹³ But we must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth. ¹⁴ For this purpose he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by our letter.

¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, ¹⁷ comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Cantor: Jesus Christ is the firstborn | of the dead; * to him be glory and dominion forev- | er and ever.

C: Repeat the Alleluias.

GOSPEL: Luke 20:27-38

Some Sadducees, who do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, try to trap Jesus. They formulate the convoluted case of a serial widow who marries a succession of seven brothers. Jesus responds by teaching about God to whom all are alive and in whom all relationships are fulfilled.

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

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

²⁷ Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus ²⁸ and asked him a question: “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. ²⁹ Now there were seven brothers; the first married a woman and died childless; ³⁰ then the second ³¹ and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. ³² Finally the woman also died. ³³ In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her.”

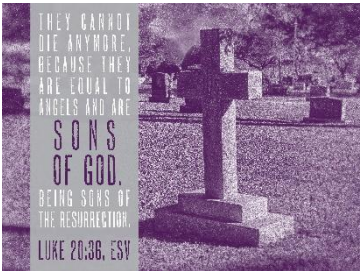
³⁴ Jesus said to them, “Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage, ³⁵ but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. ³⁶ Indeed, they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. ³⁷ And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. ³⁸ Now he is God not of the dead but of the living, for to him all of them are alive.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

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

Stand



HYMN OF THE DAY *I know that My Redeemer Lives! –St. 1, 2, 7, 8*

1 I know that my Re - deem - er lives! What com - fort
 2 He lives tri - um - phant from the grave; he lives e -
 3 He lives to grant me rich sup - ply; he lives to
 4 He lives to si - lence all my fears; he lives to

this sweet sen - tence gives! He lives, he lives, who
 ter - nal - ly to save; he lives ex - alt - ed,
 guide me with his eye; he lives to com - fort
 wipe a - way my tears; he lives to calm my

once was dead; he lives, my ev - er - liv - ing head!
 throned a - bove; he lives to rule his church in love.
 me when faint; he lives to hear my soul's com - plaint.
 trou - bled heart; he lives all bless - ings to im - part.

5 He lives to bless me with his love;
 he lives to plead for me above;
 he lives my hungry soul to feed;
 he lives to help in time of need.

7 He lives and grants me daily breath;
 he lives, and I shall conquer death;
 he lives my mansion to prepare;
 he lives to bring me safely there.

6 He lives, my kind, wise, heav'nly friend;
 he lives and loves me to the end;
 he lives, and while he lives, I'll sing;
 he lives, my prophet, priest, and king!

8 He lives, all glory to his name!
 He lives, my Savior, still the same;
 what joy this blest assurance gives:
 I know that my Redeemer lives!

Text: Samuel Medley, 1738–1799, alt.

Music: DUKE STREET, attr. John Hatton, d. 1793

Sit

SERVICE OF HOLY BAPTISM

P: In Holy Baptism our gracious heavenly Father liberates us from sin and death by joining us to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are born children of a fallen humanity; in the waters of Baptism we are reborn children of God and inheritors of eternal life. By water and the Holy Spirit, we are made members of the Church which is the body of Christ. As we live with him and with his people, we grow in faith, love, and obedience to the will of God.

The pastor addresses the parents.

Beckham Alynn McWilliams is presented to receive the sacrament of Holy Baptism.

In Christian love you have presented Beckham Alynn for Holy Baptism. You should, therefore, faithfully bring him to the services of God's house, and teach him the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. As he grows in years, you should place in his hands the Holy Scriptures and provide for his instruction in the Christian faith, that, living in the covenant of his Baptism and in communion with the Church, he may lead a godly life until the day of Jesus Christ.

P: Do you promise to fulfill these obligations?

R: I do.

Water is poured into the font.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P: Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father:

We give you thanks, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and you created heaven and earth. By the gift of water, you nourish and sustain us and all living things.

By the waters of the flood you condemned the wicked and saved those whom you had chosen, Noah and his family. You led Israel by the pillar of cloud and fire through the sea, out of slavery into the freedom of the promised land. In the waters of the Jordan your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Spirit. By the baptism of his own death and resurrection your beloved Son has set us free from the bondage to sin

and death, and has opened the way to the joy and freedom of everlasting life. He made water a sign of the kingdom and of cleansing and rebirth. In obedience to his command, we make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, so that he who is here baptized may be given new life. Wash away the sin of those who are cleansed by this water and bring them forth as inheritors of your glorious kingdom.

To you be given praise and honor and worship through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C: Amen

P: I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the Church, the faith in which we baptize.

P: Do you renounce all the forces of evil, the devil, and all his empty promises?

R: I do.

Stand

P: Do you believe in God the Father?

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

P: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

C: 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.

P: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

C: 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

Sit

P: Beckham Alynn,
I baptize you in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Laying both hands on the head of the newly baptized, the pastor prays:

P: Let us pray,
God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we give you thanks for
freeing your sons and daughters from the power of sin and for
raising them up to a new life through this holy sacrament. Pour
your Holy Spirit upon Beckham Alynn: the spirit of wisdom and
understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of
knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your
presence.

C: Amen

The pastor marks the sign of the cross with oil on the forehead of the baptized. As the sign of the cross is made, the pastor says:

P: Beckham Alynn, child of God, you have been sealed
by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.

The child is wrapped with the baptismal garment.

P: Beckham Alynn, baptized into Christ, you have been
clothed in the righteousness of Christ and prepared with us to
celebrate his great high feast.

The pastor presents a candle, lit from the paschal candle, to the baptized, and says:

P: Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good
works and glorify your Father in heaven.

P: O God, the giver of all life, look with kindness upon the father and
mother of this child. Let them ever rejoice in the gift you have
given them. Make them teachers and examples of righteousness
for their child. Strengthen them in their own Baptism so they may
share eternally with their child the salvation you have given them,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

Stand. The pastor and the baptismal group face the congregation.

P: Through Baptism God has made this new brother a member of the
priesthood we all share in Christ Jesus, that we may proclaim the

praise of God and bear his creative and redeeming Word to all the world.

C: We welcome you into the Lord's family. We receive you as a fellow member of the body of Christ, a child of the same heavenly Father, and a worker with us in the kingdom of God.

Presentation of the Faith Chest

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A brief silence is held after the introduction.

P: Gathered with one voice, we offer our prayers 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 offer these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your grace and unyielding love; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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.

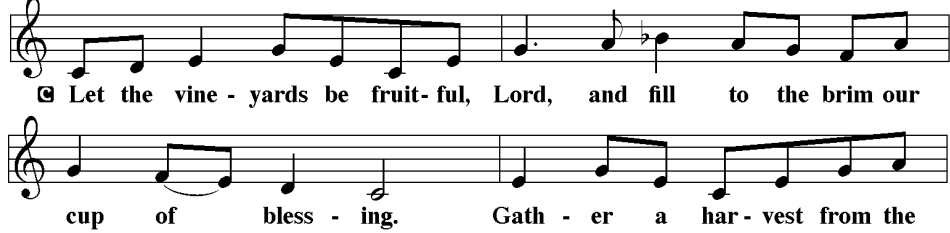
ANTHEM

Agnus Dei..... Michael W. Smith/Joel Raney

Stand

OFFERTORY

As the gifts are presented, the Offertory is sung



C 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: God of healing and hope,
 you bless those who are hungry,
 promising to fill them with good things.
 Fulfill that promise through us and these your gifts.
 Nourish us with the abundance of your feast
 and unite us into the blessed body of Jesus Christ our Savior,
 now and forever.
 Amen

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so with you.

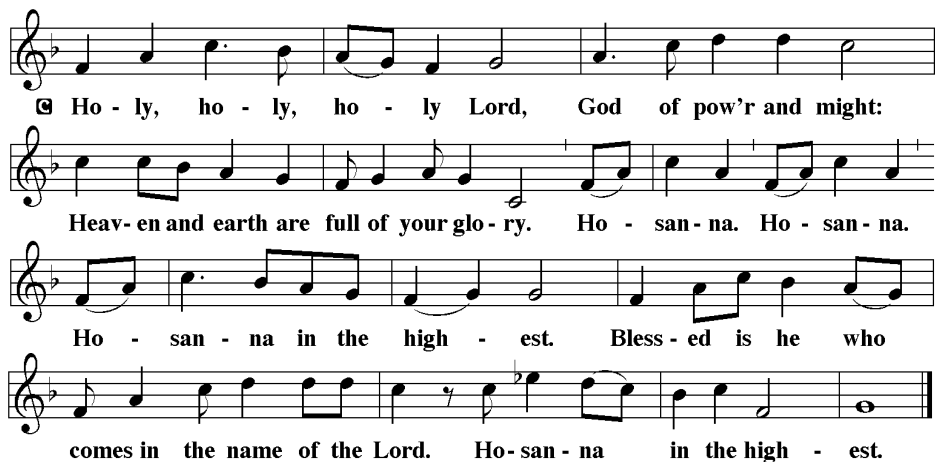
P Lift up your hearts. **C** We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give 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]: 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: There is a place for you at the table of God.
Come, receive the food that does not perish,
a taste of life eternal.

C: Thanks be to God.



C Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the

sin of the world; grant us peace.

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
In the Quiet ConsecrationLBW 223

1 In the qui - et con - se - cra - tion Of this
2 Christ, our liv - ing bread from heav - en, Lord, whose
3 By your death for sin a - ton - ing, By your
4 While a - far in sol - emn ra - diance Shines the

glad com - mu - nion hour, Here we rest in you, Lord
blood is drink in - deed: Here by faith and with thanks-
res - ur - rec - tion life, Hold us fast in bless - ed
feast that is to come Af - ter con - flict, toil, and

Je - sus, Taste your love, and touch your pow'r.
giv - ing In this feast on you we feed.
u - nion; Gird us, nerve us for the strife;
test - ing— Your great feast of love and home.

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.

God of field and flower, wheat and grape,
you have nourished us with the bread of heaven
that gives life to the world.

Strengthened by the body and blood of your Son,
send us out to gather your good gifts for all who hunger and thirst,
and embolden us to love and serve in Christ's name.

C: Amen

SENDING

BLESSING

P: The love of God the Sovereign strengthen you,
God the Son save you,
and God the Holy Spirit anoint you for the work ahead.
The holy Trinity bless you +
and grant you a faithful and courageous heart
now and forever.

C: Amen

SENDING HYMN

Blessed Assurance



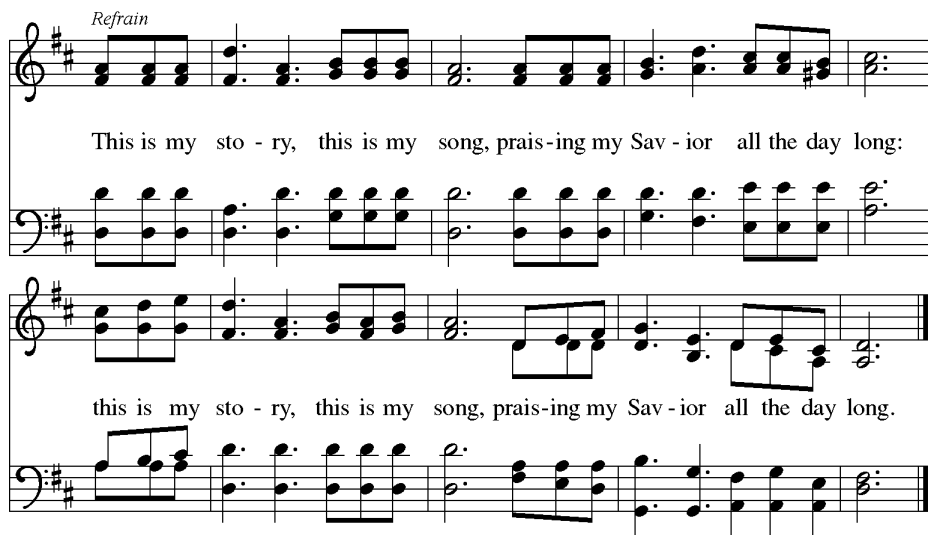
- 1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
- 2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
- 3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.
an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.
watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.



Refrain



This is my sto - ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav - ior all the day long:

this is my sto - ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav - ior all the day long.

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915

Music: ASSURANCE, Phoebe P. Knapp, 1830–1908

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Share the Harvest.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Ushers: Fred Harbaugh, Jean Nolan, Diana Rooker, Susan Christ

Lay Assistant: Susan Bryan; **Comm. Assist.:** Fred Harbaugh

Acolyte: Alyx Taylor; **Altar Guild:** Pam Eveleth, April Gardner

Greeters/Presenters: Carol Winter, Marilyn Winter

Cantor: Janet Stroble; **Flower Delivery:** Susan Bryan

IN BLESSED MEMORY

The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of our parents, David C. Reigel and Gladys Reigel Batey, by their daughters, Evelyn, Merry and Penny.

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.

Today we welcome into the Body of Christ through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, Beckham Alynn McWilliams, son of Lexi and Nicholas McWilliams. We promise to keep him in our prayers, asking God's guidance as they raise their son in our Christian faith.

Official Notice is hereby given of the **Annual Congregation Meeting** to be held on **Sunday, November 23rd**. This meeting will be held immediately after worship. Please plan on attending.

Please join us on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm for Bible Study and Fellowship. *All are welcome!*

Our Advent Kid's Event will be held on Saturday, December 6th from 9 until noon. As usual we will need your assistance with volunteering. Please contact Kathryn Pratt at 570-244-6964 if you are able to help. Please prayerfully consider this opportunity to share God's presence with the children in our community. Thank you, Kathryn

White Gifts Tags are now being prepared for the Angel Tree. **Tag Requests:** We often receive requests from individuals who wish to take all of the tags for one child, or sometimes for two or more children in the same family. If you would like to "adopt" a child by taking all of that child's tags, **please contact Kathy Wither (570) 651-2802 or Jeanette Green (570) 916-7500 talk or text, no later than Wednesday, November 12.**

Christmas Basket Food Donations: We are beginning our food collection early this year to fill the baskets we give to families in need at Christmas time. **Food donations** may be placed in the bin in the narthex on Sunday mornings or in the specially marked bin in the elevator alcove during the week. **Monetary donations** are also needed for the purchase of perishable items. Please secure your gifts in an envelope marked **"Christmas Baskets"** and place it in the offering plate or mail to the church office. Checks are to be made out to Messiah Lutheran Church with "Christmas Baskets" written in the memo line. **All donations are due no later than Sunday, December 14.** *Thank you for opening your hearts to help those in need!*

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

324 South Howard Street | South Williamsport, PA 17702
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Something Different

Sometimes the gospels give us the impression that Jesus would make a great lawyer. The Sadducees seem to ask him a pretty straightforward question, but Jesus answers it as though he is deliberately sidestepping the point. Indeed, he answers a lot of questions this way, apparently talking about something totally unrelated to the conversation at hand. If we pay close attention, though, we see that Jesus is directing us to an important point, even if it seems altogether different from the original track.

The Sadducees are challenging the validity of the resurrection with a hyperbolic question about ancient Hebrew marriage customs. But Jesus basically says, "Look, God came to Moses in the burning bush and said, 'I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob here and now, in the present. And I am the God of the living, not the dead.' Therefore, God's chosen ones are alive and well after death!"

Jesus knows that the reality of the resurrection is too hard for them to understand. It's too hard for *any* of us to understand. So instead of responding to their literal question, he offers some comfort. He says, "Listen, Moses already showed us that these saints are alive and well with God. It's okay. Don't worry about what comes next. God's got this."

Death is scary, so Jesus is giving us a word of assurance to help us face it. That word is this: "You will be resurrected. It's okay to be afraid. It's okay to not know what the resurrection will look like or who is going to be sitting where. Just remember that you are a beloved child of God and will be made alive together with all the saints."

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