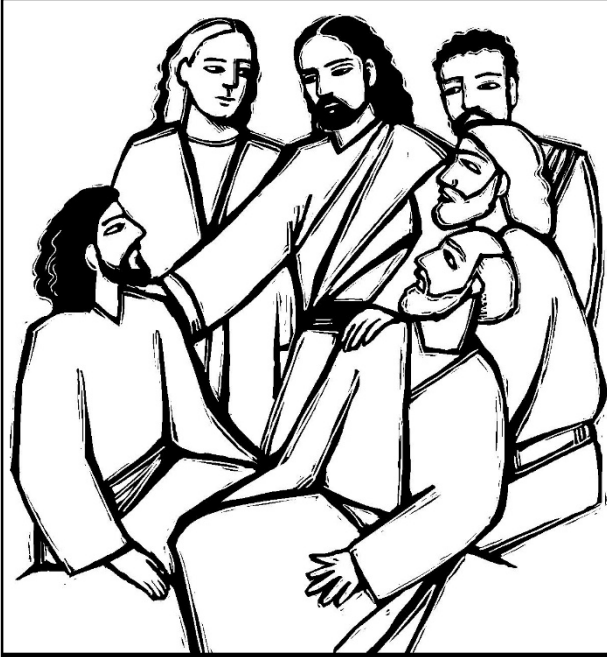


Messiah Lutheran Church

GATHER, EMPOWER, SERVE



“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.”

John 14:1 NRSV

✠ Holy Communion ✠
Fifth Sunday of Easter
May 3, 2026



FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, today's gospel includes Jesus' promise that he goes to prepare a place for his followers in his Father's house. Our baptism commissions us to share Jesus' mission in the world. As 1 Peter reminds us, we are a holy people, called to proclaim the one who called us out of darkness into light. In words and deeds we bear witness to the risen Christ—our way, our truth, our life.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Stand

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C: **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

P: Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb!

C: **Amen.**

P: Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Water may be poured into the font

P: Merciful God,
We thank you for the waters of creation
that nourish us.

P: Blessed are you.

C: **You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

P: Jesus Christ,
We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection.
Lead us to drink of those waters that gush up to eternal life.

P: Blessed are you.

C: **You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

P: Holy Spirit,
As once you descended upon our Christ and us at Holy Baptism,
descend upon us once again and fill us with the breath of peace.

P: Blessed are you.

C: **You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

P: Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism,
and for making us a new creation.
We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise,
now and forever.

C: **Amen**

GATHERING HYMN

Now All the Vault of Heaven ResoundsLBW 143



1 Now all the vault of heav'n re - sounds in praise of love that
 2 E - ter - nal is the gift he brings, there - fore our heart with
 3 Oh, fill us, Lord, with daunt - less love; set heart and will on
 4 A - dor - ing prais - es now we bring and with the heav'n - ly



still a - bounds: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 rap - ture sings: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 things a - bove that we con - quer through your tri - umph;
 bless - ed sing: "Christ has tri - umphed! Al - le - lu - ia!"



Sing, choirs of an - gels, loud and clear! Re - peat their song
 Now still he comes to give us life and by his pres -
 grant grace suf - fi - cient for life's day that by our lives
 Be to the Fa - ther, and our Lord, to Spir - it blest,



of glo - ry here: "Christ has tri - umphed! Christ has tri - umphed!"
 ence stills all strife. Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!
 we tru - ly say: Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!
 most ho - ly God, all the glo - ry, nev - er end - ing!



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Text: Paul Z. Strodach, 1876–1947, alt.

Music: LASST UNS ERFREUEN, *Geistliche Kirchengesänge*, Köln, 1623

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



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



B 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



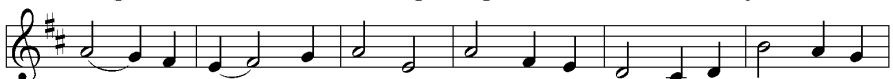
strength, and hon-or and bless-ing and glo-ry are his.



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.

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen

Sit

WORD**FIRST READING: Acts 7:55-60**

Stephen was one of the seven men chosen by the apostles to serve tables so that the apostles could be free to serve the word (Acts 6:1-6). Stephen does more than distribute food, however. For his preaching of God's word, he becomes the first martyr of the faith.

A: A Reading from Acts:

⁵⁵ Filled with the Holy Spirit, Stephen gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" ⁵⁷ But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸ Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him, and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

The cantor sings the refrain; the congregation repeats it.



In - to your hands, O LORD, I com - mend my spir - it.

Sung responsively between the cantor and congregation.



¹ In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be | put to shame;
deliver me | in your righteousness.

² **Incline your | ear to me;**
make haste to de- | liver me.

³ Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag | and my
stronghold;
for the sake of your name, lead | me and guide me.

⁴ **Take me out of the net that they have secretly | set for me,**
for you are my tow- | er of strength. R

⁵ Into your hands I com- | mend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O LORD, | God of truth.

¹⁵ **My times are | in your hand;
rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those
who | persecute me.**

¹⁶ Let your face shine up- | on your servant;
save me in your | steadfast love.” **R**

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2:2-10

Christ is the cornerstone of God's saving work and the foundation of our lives. We are God's chosen, holy people who continuously celebrate and declare the mercy of God we experience through Jesus Christ.

A: A Reading from First Peter:

² Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

⁴ Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵ like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in scripture:

“See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

⁷ This honor, then, is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,
“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner,”

⁸ and
“A stone that makes them stumble
and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

¹⁰ Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

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: I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

C: Repeat the Alleluias.

GOSPEL: John 14:1-14

Jesus uses an image familiar to the people of his day to make a point about spiritual leadership. Those who listen to Jesus are led to abundant life.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fourteenth chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to the disciples: ¹“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ²In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to the place where I am going.” ⁵Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

⁸Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, but if you do not, then believe because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON.....**Pastor Kliner**

Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY *O Jesus, I have Promised*

1 O Je - sus, I have prom - ised to serve you to the end;
 2 Oh, let me feel you near me; the world is ev - er near.
 3 Oh, let me hear you speak - ing in ac - cents clear and still
 4 O Je - sus, you have prom - ised to all who fol - low you

re - main for - ev - er near me, my mas - ter and my friend.
 I see the sights that daz - zle, the tempt - ing sounds I hear.
 a - bove the storms of pas - sion, the mur - murs of self - will.
 that where you are in glo - ry your ser - vant shall be too.

I shall not fear the bat - tle if you are by my side,
 My foes are ev - er near me, a - round me and with - in;
 Now speak to re - as - sure me, to has - ten or con - trol;
 And Je - sus, I have prom - ised to serve you to the end;

nor wan - der from the path - way if you will be my guide.
 but, Je - sus, then draw near - er to shield my soul from sin.
 now speak and make me lis - ten, O Guard - ian of my soul.
 oh, give me grace to fol - low, my mas - ter and my friend.

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: Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

After each petition:

P: Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

The prayers conclude:

P: God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through 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

On This Day..... Michael Jothen

Stand

OFFERTORY

As the gifts are presented, the Offertory is sung

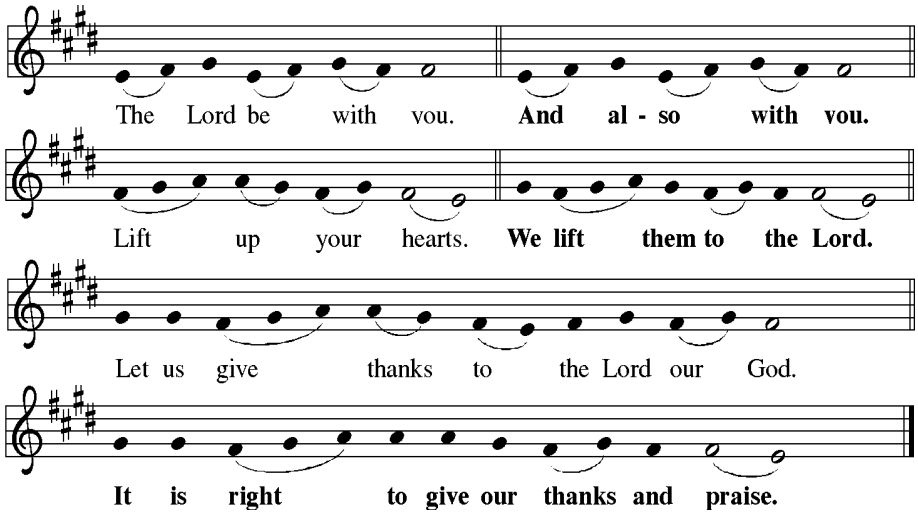
Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
 bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
 fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -
 nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your
 pres - ence,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

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

C Merciful God,
 accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory.
 You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day
 when we will hunger and thirst no more.
 Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus,
 that goodness and mercy may follow us
 and bless the world you love.
 In the name of Jesus,
 Amen

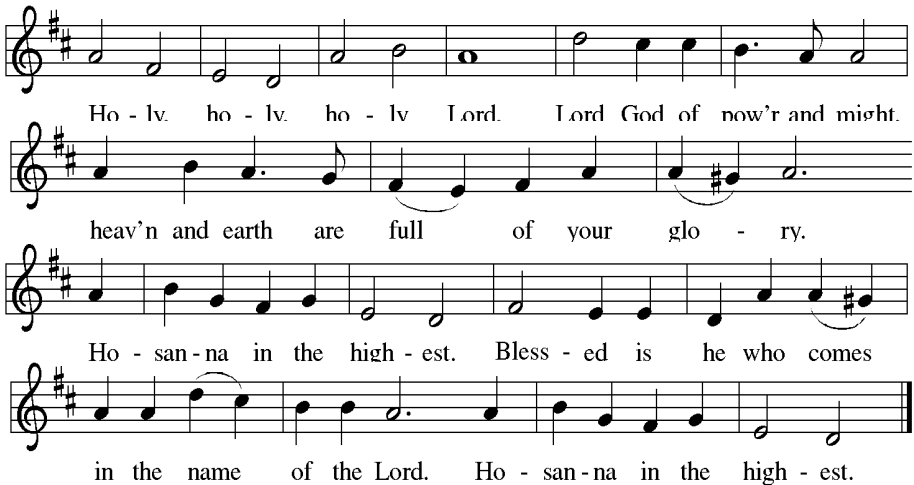
GREAT THANKSGIVING



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 now'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 new life.
Receive the risen Lord.

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 God We Praise You

1 Lord God, we praise you, now the night is o - ver, ac - tive and
2 Mon-arch of all things, fit us for your man - sions; ban - ish our
3 All - ho - ly Fa - ther, Son, and e - qual Spir - it, Trin - i - ty

watch-ful, stand - ing here be - fore you; sing - ing, we of - fer
weak-ness, health and whole-ness send - ing; bring us to heav - en,
bless - ed, send us your sal - va - tion; yours is the glo - ry,



prayer and med - i - ta - tion; thus we a - dore you.
 where your saints u - nit - ed joy with - out end - ing.
 gleam - ing and re - sound - ing through all cre - a - tion.

Text: attr. Gregory I, 540–604; tr. composite
 Music: CHRISTE SANCTORUM, Paris *Antiphoner*, 1681

Stand

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

Holy One,
 through this meal you have made your home among us
 and are making all things new.

Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts,
 to love our enemies,
 and to bring your healing to the nations.

In the name of Jesus,

C: Amen

SENDING

BLESSING

P: God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end,
 Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead,
 and the Spirit, our advocate and peace,
 † bless you now and forever.

C: Amen

SENDING HYMN

Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing..... LBW 363

1 Christ is a - live! Let Chris - tians sing. His cross stands
 2 Christ is a - live! No long - er bound To dis - tant
 3 Not throned a - far, re - mote - ly high, Un - touched, un -
 4 In ev - 'ry in - sult, rift, and war, Where col - or,

emp - ty to the sky. Let streets and homes with
 years in Pal - es - tine, He comes to claim the
 moved by hu - man pains, But dai - ly, in the
 scorn, or wealth di - vide, He suf - fers still, yet

prais - es ring. In death his love shall nev - er die.
 here and now And con - quer ev - 'ry place and time.
 midst of life, Our Sav - ior with the Fa - ther reigns.
 loves the more, And lives, though ev - er cru - ci - fied.

5 Christ is alive! Ascended Lord—
 He rules the world his Father made,
 Till, in the end, his love adored
 Shall be to all on earth displayed.

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia!

C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

POSTLUDE

SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Ushers: Mike Larson, Brian Bair, Al Cole, Sally Congdon, Kim Brofee;

Lay Assistant: Carol Waltz; **Comm. Asst.:** Mary Schultz

Acolyte: Alivia Klemick; **Altar Guild:** Susan Bryan, Jeannie Bower

Greeters/Presenters: Georgette Copp, Ray Demarest; **Cantor:** Mike Yoder

Flower Delivery: Paul Weaver

IN BLESSED MEMORY

The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God and in loving and living memory of George, Annamary, Susan and David Hutchinson by the Hutchinson and Nancarrow families.

The Basket of Flowers is given to the Glory of God and in honor of Shirley Fullmer's 92nd birthday, by her family.

The Basket of Flowers is given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of the 79th wedding anniversary of David and Martha Larson, May 3rd, by their son Mike, daughter-in-law Dianne and family.

The Sanctuary Lamp burns in memory of Susan Hutchinson, with love from Gary and 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 and information to a congregation member. *We hope to see you again.*

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL "Tropical Trek" will be held Monday, June 15 – Friday, June 19. If you would like to volunteer to help, please call Kathryn at 570-244-6964 or call the church office. **THINGS WE NEED:** If you have any artificial ivy, ferns or other house plants/trees that we can borrow or have, it would be appreciated (no Christmas trees or evergreen garlands). If you do want them returned, please make sure to put your name on them somewhere. We will also be collecting brown packaging paper like what comes in Amazon shipments. Please place your items in the box in the alcove near the elevator. Thank you, Kathryn Pratt

Because you asked ... Our sew-a-thons were very productive this year, but a few people have approached us asking to sew additional backpacks at home. If you enjoy sewing and would like something to keep you busy, we do have a small stash of backpacks in various stages of production that could be finished. Please contact Kathy Wither at 570-651-2802, call or text, and she will get them to you. **Thank you for your continued interest and support!**

Seeking Names of Graduates: Please call the church office by May 31st, with the name/address of anyone in your family who is graduating from High School and Undergrad or Grad School this spring. Your Messiah family would like to recognize your accomplishment. *Thank you!*

Eucharistic Ministers will be sent out Sunday, May 17th. Please let the office know if you are not available to take communion. If anyone is homebound, can't get to church and would like to receive Communion please notify the church office at 570-326-9171.

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH
Rev. Gerald Kliner, Senior Pastor

JARED GIST, ORGANIST

324 South Howard Street | South Williamsport, PA 17702
(570) 326-9171 | www.messiahsouth.org

Love, Love, Love

That's what it's all about! Jesus loves.

Jesus' love is a constant in scripture. From his humble birth to his teachings, parables, healing miracles, feeding of the multitudes, power over creation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus loves.

Some people wanted the Messiah to take a much different approach. They thought their savior would come as a strong military leader, but Jesus did not start a violent overthrow of the Roman Empire. He just could not and would not do anything in conflict with love. He gave himself up and loved until the very end. In his last breath on the cross, he forgave everyone involved in crucifying him. This is the depth of the amazing love of God shown to us in Christ Jesus.

Stephen, "a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit" (Acts 6:5), strove to live as Jesus lived and to love as Jesus loved. As he was being stoned to death, Stephen shouted, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them" (7:60).

Following Jesus was not easy for Stephen and other early Christians. It is not easy today. But in today's gospel reading, Jesus assures his followers—then and now—of three things. First, the great doors to a place with God will be open to us, in a house with many rooms. Second, he is the way, truth, and life, and by knowing him, we come to know God the Father. Third, we can ask him for anything. These are promises of Jesus' continuing care for us, for people of every time and place, and for all creation.

Jesus loves.

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