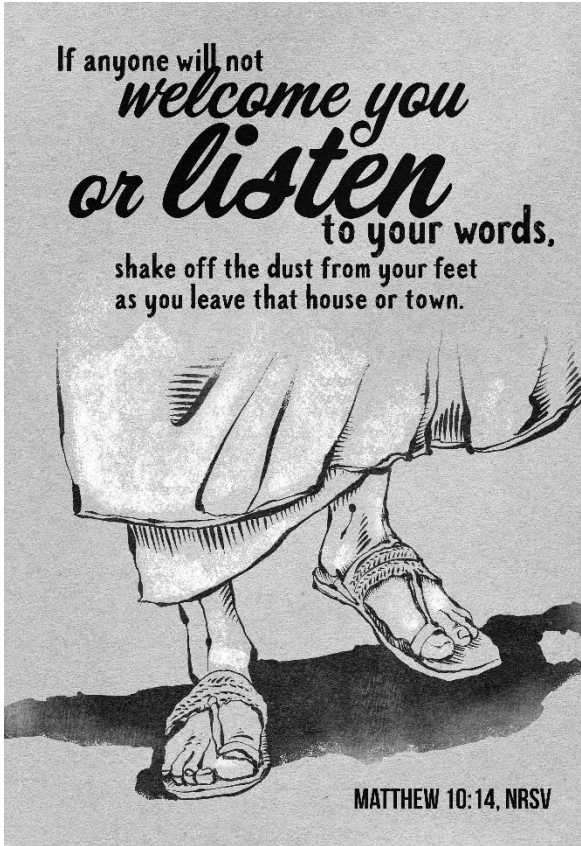


# Messiah Lutheran Church

GATHER, EMPOWER, SERVE



✠ Holy Communion ✠

Third Sunday after Pentecost

June 14, 2026



Moses tells the Israelites that they are called to be a priestly kingdom and a holy people. Jesus sends out the disciples as laborers into the harvest. In baptism we too are anointed for ministry, sharing God's compassion with our needy world. From the Lord's table we go forth to proclaim the good news, to heal the sick, and to share our bread with the hungry.

**THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**GATHERING**

**PRELUDE**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

**P**: In the name of the Father,  
and of the † Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**C**: Amen.

**P**: Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near to God with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the Name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, to grant us the forgiveness of all our sins, and through the grace of the Holy spirit, true repentance and amendment of our sinful lives.

*Kneel*

*Silence is kept for meditation...*

**P**: Almighty God, merciful Father:

**C**: **I have sinned against you in thought, in word, and in deed;**

**By what I have done and what I have left undone.**

**I have not loved you with my whole heart, mind, and strength.**

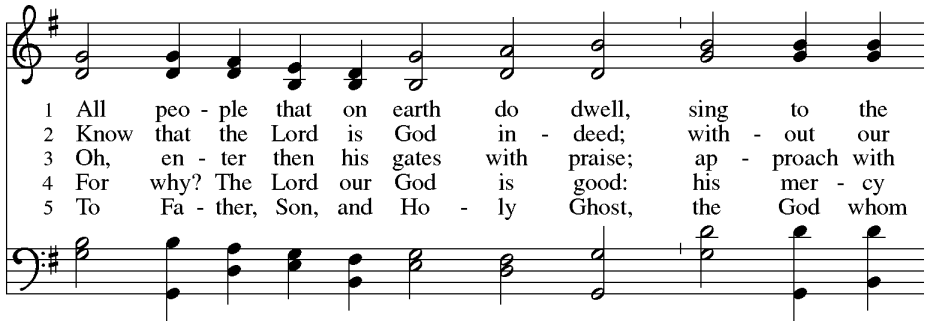
**I have not loved my neighbor as myself.**

**For the sake of our beloved Son, who suffered upon the cross for me,**

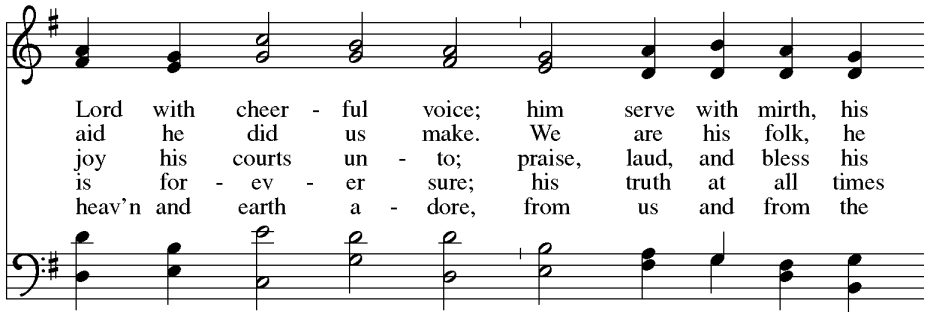
**Have mercy upon me and forgive me all my sin!**

**P**: Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, does not desire the death of sinners, but rather that they may turn from their wickedness and live. As a Called and Ordained minister of the church of Jesus Christ, and by his authority, I declare to you the forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C**: Amen.

**GATHERING HYMN** *All People That on Earth Do Dwell*


1 All peo - ple that on earth do dwell, sing to the  
 2 Know that the Lord is God in - deed; with - out our  
 3 Oh, en - ter then his gates with praise; ap - proach with  
 4 For why? The Lord our God is good: his mer - cy  
 5 To Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost, the God whom



Lord with cheer - ful voice; him serve with mirth, his  
 aid he did - us make. We are his folk, he  
 joy his courts un - to; praise, laud, and bless his  
 is for - ev - er sure; his truth at all times  
 heav'n and earth a - dore, from us and from the



praise forth tell; come ye be - fore him and re - joice.  
 doth us feed, and for his sheep he doth us take.  
 name al - ways, for it is seem - ly so to do.  
 firm - ly stood, and shall from age to age en - dure.  
 an - gel host be praise and glo - ry ev - er - more.

Text: William Kethe, d. c. 1594

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

**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.

**HYMN OF PRAISE**

*Refrain*



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



1 Lord God, heav'n-ly King, al - might-y God and Fa-ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.

*Refrain*



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



2 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.

*Refrain*



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



3 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, a - - men.

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

God of compassion, you have opened the way for us and brought us to yourself. Pour your love into our hearts, that, overflowing with joy, we may freely share the blessings of your realm and faithfully proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C:** Amen.*Sit***WORD****FIRST READING: Exodus 19:2-8a**

*At Sinai God assured Israel, "You shall be my treasured possession," and commissioned them to serve as mediating priests for the nations. The people commit themselves completely to God's will.*

**A:** A Reading from Exodus:

<sup>2</sup>The Israelites journeyed from Rephidim, entered the wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness; Israel camped there in front of the mountain.<sup>3</sup> Then Moses went up to God; the LORD called to him from the mountain, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the Israelites: <sup>4</sup>'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. <sup>5</sup>Now, therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, <sup>6</sup>but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites."

<sup>7</sup>So Moses went, summoned the elders of the people, and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. <sup>8a</sup>The people all answered as one, "Everything that the LORD has spoken we will do."

**A:** The word of the Lord.**C:** Thanks be to God.**PSALM: Psalm 100**

*Sung responsively between the Pastor and congregation.*

<sup>1</sup> Make a joyful noise to the LORD, | all you lands!<sup>2</sup> Serve the LORD with gladness; come into God's presence | with a song.

<sup>3</sup> **Know that the LORD is God, our maker to whom | we belong;**  
**we are God's people and the sheep | of God's pasture.**

<sup>4</sup> Enter the gates of the LORD with thanksgiving and the | courts with praise;

give thanks and bless God's | holy name.

<sup>5</sup> **Good indeed is the LORD, whose steadfast love is | everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from | age to age.**

**SECOND READING: Romans 5:1-8**

*We are no longer God's enemies but have peace with God because we were brought into a right relationship with God through Christ's death.*

**A:** A Reading from Romans:

<sup>1</sup> Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

<sup>6</sup> For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

**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.

**GOSPEL: Matthew 9:35-10:8-23**

*The mission of Jesus' followers is to continue the mission of Jesus himself. Here, he instructs his first disciples as to how they might proclaim the gospel through their words and deeds.*

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the ninth chapter.

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

<sup>35</sup> Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness. <sup>36</sup> When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; <sup>38</sup> therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

<sup>10:1</sup> Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. <sup>2</sup> These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee and his brother John; <sup>3</sup> Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus and Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup> Simon the Cananaean and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

<sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not take a road leading to gentiles, and do not enter a Samaritan town, <sup>6</sup> but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>7</sup> As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' <sup>8</sup> Cure the sick; raise the dead; cleanse those with a skin disease; cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. <sup>9</sup> Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, <sup>10</sup> no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff, for laborers deserve their food.

<sup>11</sup> Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. <sup>12</sup> As you enter the house, greet it. <sup>13</sup> If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup> If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. <sup>15</sup> Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

<sup>16</sup> "I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. <sup>17</sup> Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues, <sup>18</sup> and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the gentiles. <sup>19</sup> When they hand you over, do not

worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you at that time, <sup>20</sup> for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. <sup>21</sup> Sibling will betray sibling to death and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death, <sup>22</sup> and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. <sup>23</sup> When they persecute you in this town, flee to the next, for truly I tell you, you will not have finished going through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”

**P:** The Gospel of the Lord.

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

Sit

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

Stand

**HYMN OF THE DAY**      *In Christ Called to Baptize*

1 In Christ called to bap - tize, we wit - ness to grace  
 2 In Christ called to ban - quet, one ta - ble we share,  
 3 In Christ called to wit - ness, by grace we will preach  
 4 U - nite us, a - noint us, O Spir - it of love,

and gath - er a peo - ple from each land and race.  
 a ha - ven of wel - come, a cir - cle of care.  
 the life - giv - ing gos - pel; God's love we will teach.  
 for you are with - in us, a - round us, a - bove.

In deep, flow - ing wa - ters, we share in Christ's death,  
 Al - though we are man - y, we share in one bread.  
 By grace may our liv - ing give proof to our praise  
 E - quip us for ser - vice with gifts you be - stow.

then, ris - ing to new life, give thanks with each breath.  
 One cup of thanks - giv - ing pro - claims Christ, our head.  
 in cost - ly com - pas - sion re - flect - ing Christ's ways.  
 In Christ is our call - ing. In Christ may we grow.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947

Music: ST. DENIO, Welsh traditional; arr. John Roberts, 1807-1876, alt.  
 Text © 1995 Pilgrim Press. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

### **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:** Let us pray for the Church, the world, and all people according to their need...

*After each petition:*

**P:** Lord, in your mercy,

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

*The prayers conclude:*

**P:** All these things, most merciful God, we commend into your hands, 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.*

Stand

**OFFERTORY**

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

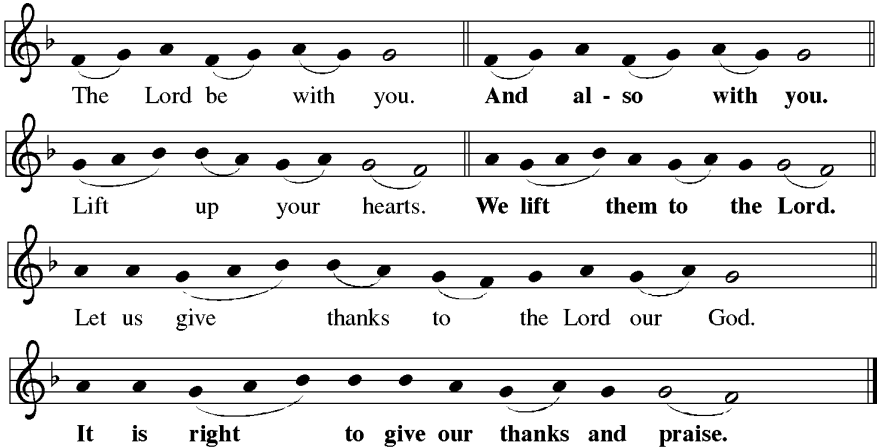
1 Ac - cept, O Lord, the gifts we bring to place up - on your ta - ble.  
 2 The vines were plant - ed, seeds were sown. They grew in your good plea - sure.  
 3 Our hopes and dreams, our toils and cares we lift in prayer be - fore you.

We do not wor - ship as we ought but on - ly as we're a - ble.  
 What once was com - mon, dail - y food be - comes a ho - ly trea - sure.  
 Lord, by your grace now come to us, as hum - bly we a - dore you.

**OFFERING PRAYER**

**A**: Let us pray... Blessed are you,

**C**: **O Lord, our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness, you have blessed us with these gifts. With them, we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made; for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**GREAT THANKSGIVING**


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

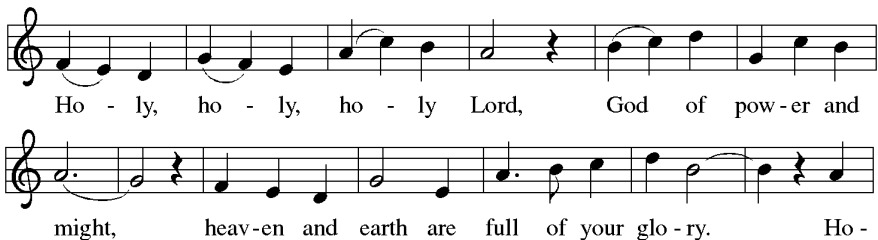
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

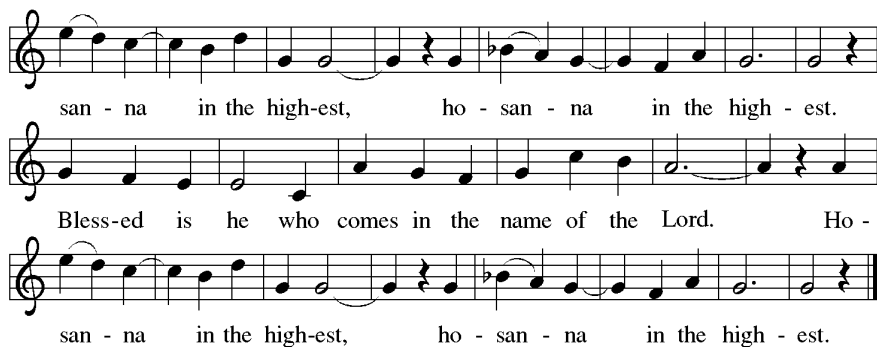
**PREFACE**

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, God of pow - er and

might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -



san - na in the high-est, 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

### **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

**P**: Heavenly Father, you are holy indeed and all creation rightly gives you thanks and praise.

All life, all holiness comes from you, through your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, by the working of the Holy Spirit.

From age to age you gather a people unto yourself, so that, from the rising of the sun to its setting, a perfect offering may be made to the glory of your holy name.

And so, Father, we bring you these gifts:

We ask you to make them Holy by the power of your Spirit, that they may become the Body and Blood of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at whose command we celebrate this Eucharist.

For, in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying:

TAKE AND EAT.

THIS IS MY BODY WHICH IS GIVEN UP FOR YOU.

DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

After supper He took the cup. Again, he gave Thanks and Praise to you and gave it them to drink saying:

DRINK OF THIS, ALL OF YOU:

THIS CUP IS MY BLOOD OF THE NEW AND EVERLASTING COVENANT.

IT WILL BE Poured OUT FOR YOU AND FOR MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN.

DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

The mystery of faith:

**C** **Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!**

**P**: And so, Father Most Holy, calling to mind the death your Son endured for our salvation, his glorious Resurrection and his ascension into heaven, and ready to greet him when he comes again, we offer you in thanksgiving this holy and living sacrifice of praise—

Look with favor on your Church, and see the Victim whose death has reconciled us to yourself.

Grant that we, who are nourished by our Lord's body and blood, may be filled with his Holy Spirit, and become one body, one spirit in Christ Jesus.

May he make us an everlasting gift to you and enable us to share in the inheritance of your Saints: the Patriarchs and Prophets, the Holy Apostles and Martyrs, and all your Saints in Light, whose witness encourages us in our Faith.

Strengthen in faith and love your pilgrim Church on earth; together with our Bishops, Pastors, Deacons and the entire people your son has won for you.

Hear now the prayers of the family you have gathered here before you. In mercy and love, unite all your children wherever they may be.

Welcome into your Kingdom our departed brothers and sisters, and all who have left this world in your friendship.

There in your Kingdom, freed from the corruption of sin and death, we shall proclaim your glory with every creature, through Christ our Lord, through whom you give us everything that is good.

Through Him, with Him and in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours almighty Father, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**P:** Let us pray with confidence in the words that our Lord Jesus Christ has given us...

**C:** **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**

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.

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

**P:** Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

**C:** **Thanks be to God!**

**P:** Come now and eat of the Bread of Life and drink of the Cup of Salvation! Taste and see, the Lord is good!

**C:** **Amen!**

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**

**The Son of God, Our Christ..... LBW 434**



1 The Son of God, our Christ, the Word, the Way,  
 2 In ev - 'ry test, in tri - als man - i - fold,  
 3 To - day, as then, Christ sum - mons us to dare  
 4 In cit - y street, in town, or on the soil,  
 5 Wher - e'er we find our wit - ness should be made,



shared hu - man life and toiled through - out the day;  
 these ser - vants wit - nessed, by their faith made bold;  
 to fol - low bold - ly and his work to share,  
 may each serve Christ in faith - ful dai - ly toil,  
 what - e'er our task, be thou, O Christ, our aid,



from com - mon folk he called the twelve to be  
 and with the gifts and tal - ents which they brought  
 to help and heal the sick, the blind, the lame,  
 and in each thought and kind - ly word and deed,  
 that we may glad - ly give for thee our best



co - work - ers in his sa - cred min - is - try,  
 the church was found - ed and God's mes - sage taught.  
 de - clar - ing to the world his ho - ly name.  
 o - bey Christ's call and go where he shall lead.  
 and find each task di - vine - ly sent and blest.

Text: Edward M. Blumenfeld, b. 1927, alt.  
 Music: SURSUM CORDA, Alfred M. Smith, 1879-1971  
 Text © 1957, ren. 1985 The Hymn Society, admin. Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.  
 Music © 1941 Historic Church of the Ascension, Atlantic City, NJ, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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

Father in Heaven, you have fed us with the Bread of Life, your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Sustain us by the work of the Holy Spirit, through this Holy Meal, that we may abide in Christ, and he in us, to the glory of your Holy Name.

**C:** Amen.

**BENEDICTION**

**P:** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon you and gracious unto you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. And may almighty God—the Father, † The Son, and The Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**C:** Amen.

**SENDING HYMN**

*I Love to Tell the Story*..... LBW 390

1 I love to tell the sto - ry of un - seen things a - bove,  
 2 I love to tell the sto - ry: how pleas - ant to re - peat  
 3 I love to tell the sto - ry, for those who know it best

of Je - sus and his glo - ry, of Je - sus and his love.  
 what seems, each time I tell it, more won - der - ful - ly sweet!  
 seem hun - ger - ing and thirst - ing to hear it like the rest.

I love to tell the sto - ry, be - cause I know it's true;  
 I love to tell the sto - ry, for some have nev - er heard  
 And when, in scenes of glo - ry, I sing the new, new song,

it sat - is - fies my long - ings as noth - ing else would do.  
 the mes - sage of sal - va - tion from God's own ho - ly word.  
 I'll sing the old, old sto - ry that I have loved so long.

*Refrain*

I love to tell the sto - ry; I'll sing this theme in glo - ry

and tell the old, old sto - ry of Je - sus and his love.

Text: Katherine Hankey, 1834–1911  
 Music: HANKEY, William G. Fischer, 1835–1912

**DISMISSAL**

**A**: Go in Peace. Serve the Lord.

**C**: Thanks be to God.

**POSTLUDE**

### SERVICE ASSISTANTS

**Ushers:** Carl Gee, Jody Fullmer, Dave and Rita Strickler, Jimmy Gardner, Paul Ulrich; **Lay Assistant:** Kim Brofee; **Comm. Assist.:** Georgette Copp  
**Acolyte:** Alivia Klemick, **Altar Guild:** Sue Shoemaker, Yvonne Kaiser  
**Greeters/Presenters:** Sue and Dennis Shoemaker  
**Flower Delivery:** Susan Bryan

### IN BLESSED MEMORY

**The Altar Flowers** are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Judge and Mrs. H. W. Whitehead, Mr. and Mrs. George L. Stearns and Eleanor Stearns and Henry Perciballi by their family.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Welcome to Messiah Church!** It is our joy to have you worship with us. If you are visiting, please make yourself known and leave your name & information to a congregation member. We hope to see you again.

**Pastor Kliner will be out of the office Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup> after worship until Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup>** for a STS (the Society of the Holy Trinity) Chapter Retreat. Pastor Brian Vasey of St. Mark's, Williamsport will be covering for Pastor while he is gone. If you have an emergency during office hours, please call the church office at 570-326-9171 and we will assist you. After hours Pastor Vasey will take calls at 570-323-4619

**Will the individual who removed** the table cloth clips from the closet in Shaheen hall please return them to the Church Office. Thank you, Chuck Luppert

**Wednesday, July 15, 9:00 a.m. – Knot-A-Sack “Knotty Party”** – Join us for a time of fellowship, good conversation, (and Sally's cookies!) while we knot the drawstrings to complete the backpacks. *Watch for more updates later in June!*

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL "Tropical Trek"** will start tomorrow Monday, June 15 – Friday, June 19. Registration forms are available in the Bald Eagle entrance or the church office.

**It is with a heavy heart that we announce the closure of our food pantry.** We are making this change because our community traffic has dropped significantly. Unfortunately, because we have so few visitors right now, we are facing a tough problem with food waste. Good food is regularly expiring on our shelves before we can hand it out. We feel it is no longer responsible to spend our time and resources running a pantry that is not being highly utilized. Please know that your past support was not a waste. Your kindness helped us feed many families when they needed it most. We are deeply grateful for every hour you volunteered and every item you donated. To ensure our current inventory does not go to waste, we are packing up our remaining non-expired food. We are donating everything to **United Churches Food Pantry** so it can still feed hungry people. With much Gratitude, The Missional Outreach Committee

**MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**Rev. Gerald Kliner, STS, Senior Pastor**  
**JARED GIST, ORGANIST**

324 South Howard Street | South Williamsport, PA 17702  
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### **Compassion as Proclamation**

When Jesus instructed his followers to “ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers” (Matthew 9:38), his disciples might not have expected that the sending would happen so quickly, or that *they* would be the ones sent. The job of harvest laborers might seem straightforward enough: Recognize the gifts, the fruit, and use them to advance the good news of God’s work. But what prompts Jesus to tell the disciples to ask God for laborers is that he sees people who are “harassed and helpless” (v. 36) and is moved to compassion. That movement prompts us to consider that compassion is not merely a feeling that is held, but an energy that reaches out through us to others.

Congregational mission statements and our Sunday liturgy commonly reinforce that the faithful are sent into the world proclaiming the good news of God in Christ. The scriptures stress the importance of connecting oral proclamation with meaningful action, lest proclamation become merely lip service. While proclaiming the gospel might seem broad and difficult to narrow down into our many daily interactions and tasks, the guiding principle of compassion provides a touchpoint.

The disciples’ message that God’s kingdom has come near is accompanied by actions meant to alleviate suffering. When we gather as a people of faith, we receive God’s compassion in Christ that extends through the Lord’s supper and unites us in fellowship. In our prayers we are attentive to personal, local, and broad requests, asking God to receive and keep them in God’s care. These acts of worship can prepare us to extend the compassion given to us into our personal conversations and interactions with others. When we ask how we can be led by compassion, we are asking how we can proclaim the good news of God in Christ.

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