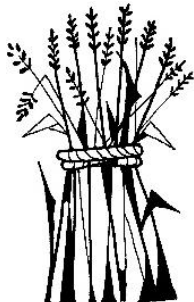


MESSIAH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
A faithful, serving community, joyfully sharing Christ's love.



Seventh Sunday After Epiphany
February 23, 2025

228 Ramapo Valley Rd, Oakland NJ 07436

www.messiahoaklandnj.org | 201-337-4900

@MessiahOaklandNJ

Sunday Worship 10:00 am

WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR WORSHIP

The congregation is invited to worship in a way that is comfortable and meaningful by standing, sitting, kneeling, coloring, etc. You may join in worship by reciting the responses in bold type.

SILENT MEDITATION DURING PRELUDE

WELCOME FROM THE PASTOR

CONFESSIONS AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life. **Amen.**

Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,

you speak blessing and compassion into the world. Forgive us for the ways we act with judgment, cruelty, or indifference. We ignore the needs of our neighbors; we resist your call to oppose injustice; we give in to scarcity and fear; we assume the worst about one another. Cleanse us from our faults and release us from their grasp. Show us your lovingkindness. Restore our hearts and repair your world, that we may live in Christ's ways. Amen.

God proclaims these words of assurance: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine." In † Christ, you are forgiven. In the Spirit, you are made free. Refreshed by the waters of mercy, live anew as beloved children of God. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG

Here I Am to Worship

Chris Tomlin

¹ Light of the world, you stepped down into darkness, open my eyes, let me see.
Beauty that made this heart adore you, hope of a life spent with you

Chorus: And here I am to worship. Here I am to bow down.

Here I am to say that you're my God.

You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy, altogether wonderful to me

² King of all days O so highly exalted, Glorious in Heaven above.
Humbly you came to the earth you created, All for love's sake became poor.

Chorus

Bridge: I'll never know how much it cost to see my sin upon that cross. (x4)

Chorus x2

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord Jesus, make us instruments of your peace, that where there is hatred, we may sow love, where there is injury, pardon, and where there is despair, hope. Grant, O divine master, that we may seek to console, to understand, and to love in your name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

FIRST READING: A Reading from Genesis 45:3-11

³ Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt."⁵ And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life.⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest.⁷ God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to keep alive for you many survivors.⁸ So it was not you who sent me here but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.⁹ Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me; do not delay.'¹⁰ You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have.¹¹ I will provide for you there, since there are five

more years of famine to come, so that you and your household and all that you have will not come to poverty.’ ”¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them, and after that his brothers talked with him.

The Word of the Lord **Thanks be to God.**

THE PSALM: Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40 will be read responsively

¹ Do not be provoked by evildoers; do not be jealous of those who do wrong.

² **For they shall soon wither like the grass, and like the green grass fade away.**

³ Put your trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and find safe pasture.

⁴ **Take delight in the LORD, who shall give you your heart’s desire.**

⁵ Commit your way to the LORD; put your trust in the LORD, and see what God will do.

⁶ **The LORD will make your vindication as clear as the light and the justice of your case like the noonday sun.**

⁷ Be still before the LORD and wait patiently. Do not be provoked by the one who prospers, the one who succeeds in evil schemes.

⁸ **Refrain from anger, leave rage alone; do not be provoked; it leads only to evil.**

⁹ For evildoers shall be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD shall possess the land.

¹⁰ **In a little while the wicked shall be no more; even if you search out their place, they will not be there.**

¹¹ But the lowly shall possess the land; they will delight in abundance of peace.

³⁹ **But the deliverance of the righteous comes from you, O LORD; you are their stronghold in time of trouble.**

⁴⁰ You, O LORD, will help them and rescue them; you will rescue them from the wicked and deliver them, because in you they seek refuge.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Halle Halle

ELW #172

Halle, halle, hallelujah. Halle, halle, hallelujah.

Halle, halle, hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

THE GOSPEL: The Holy Gospel according to Luke 6: 27-38

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ²⁷ “But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; ²⁸ bless those who curse you; pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹ If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰ Give to everyone who asks of you, and if anyone takes away what is yours, do not ask for it back again. ³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you. ³² “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those

who love them. ³³ If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive payment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. ³⁵ Instead, love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. ³⁷ “Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S SERMON Council Installation

SERMON

WE RESPOND TO GOD

HYMN OF THE DAY *Your Love is Everlasting* Dakota Road

¹ Since time began, through centuries God's love is everlasting
To distant unknown galaxies God's love is everlasting
Splendor springs forth 'cross the land God's love is everlasting
Abundance, sharing hand in hand God's love is everlasting

Chorus: Your love (your love) is lasting
Your love is everlasting
Your love (your love) is lasting
Your love is everlasting

² A mother’s womb, a brand new life God's love is everlasting
An empty tomb, the risen Christ God's love is everlasting
Weeping may last for the night God's love is everlasting
But joy breaks forth with morning light God's love is everlasting (Chorus)

³ Signs of hope, a voice of peace God's love is everlasting
The prophet's cry for war to cease God's love is everlasting
For the down and out, for the high and proud God's love is everlasting
Come all you people shout out loud God's love is everlasting (Chorus)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: APOSTLES' CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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 THE PEOPLE

Silence will be left in the prayer petitions for you to add your prayers out loud or silently

God, who sees and knows all things, who hears our prayers and listens to our cries, we lift these prayers to you, out loud and silently in our hearts.

God of Mercy, we thank you for the resurrection dawn, bringing the glory of our risen Lord who makes every day new. We thank you especially:

For the sustaining goodness of your creation

For the gifts of healing and forgiveness

For the gifts of relationships with others

For the communion of faith in your church

For what and whom else do we thank God out loud or silently...God of Grace,

Hear our Prayer

God of might, renew this weary world, heal the hurts of all your children, and bring about your peace for all in Christ Jesus, the living Lord. We pray especially:

For our Bishops, Elizabeth and Tracie, our missionary Kristin

For those who govern nations of the world

For the people in countries ravaged by strife or warfare

For all who work for peace and international harmony

For all who strive to save the earth from carelessness and destruction

For the believers of Christ in every land

For those in need of healing and comfort

For what and whom else do we pray for out loud or silently..... God of Grace,

Hear our Prayer

God of Grace, we cry out to you and pray for all those in need, knowing that prayer changes lives. For what else do we want to pray to God..... God of Grace,

Hear our Prayer

God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.

OFFERING

Offering can be left in the plates at the back of the sanctuary or given online by scanning the QR code.



OFFERTORY

Jesus, the Light of the World

TFF #59

¹ Hark! the herald angels sing,
Jesus, the Light of the world;
"Glory to the newborn King,"
Jesus, the Light of the world.

Refrain

We'll walk in the light, beautiful light,
come where the dewdrops of mercy
are bright.
Shine all around us by day and night,
Jesus, the Light of the world.

² Joyful, all you nations, rise,
Jesus, the Light of the world;
join the triumph of the skies;
Jesus, the Light of the world.

Refrain

³ Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Jesus, the Light of the world;
Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Jesus, the Light of the world.

Refrain

⁴ Hail the heav'n born Prince of
Peace!
Jesus, the Light of the world;
hail the Sun of righteousness!
Jesus, the Light of the world.

Refrain

OFFERING PRAYER

God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always.

Amen.

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

And also with you.

We lift them to the Lord.

PREFACE

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Jesus welcomes you to this table. Come and eat.

Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION

We invite you to commune in whatever way is comfortable to you either from your seat using the prepackaged elements or by coming forward to the altar rail. To commune at the altar rail, please proceed down the diagonal aisles and pick up a cup from the silver plates. You will be given a wafer and then offered wine (first chalice) or grape juice (second chalice). For those communing online, please join us using whatever bread/crackers and wine/grape juice you have at home. All are welcome at God's table.

The body and blood of Christ, given for you. **Amen**

COMMUNION SONG

Blessed be God, who Forgives

ELW #221

Blessed be God, who forgives all our sins, who
heals all our ills, who crowns us with Mercy and love.

COMMUNION HYMN

O Come to the Altar

Elevation Worship

¹Are you hurting and broken within?
Overwhelmed by the weight of your sin?
Jesus is calling
Have you come to the end of yourself?
Do you thirst for a drink from the well?
Jesus is calling
Chorus: O come to the altar
The Father's arms are open wide
Forgiveness was bought with
The precious blood of Jesus Christ

Chorus (x2)
Bridge (x2)
Oh, what a Savior
Isn't He wonderful?
Sing hallelujah, Christ is risen
Bow down before Him
For He is Lord of all
Sing hallelujah, Christ is risen
Chorus (x2)

²Leave behind your regrets and
mistakes
Come today, there's no reason to wait
Jesus is calling
Bring your sorrows and trade them for
joy
From the ashes, a new life is born Jesus
is calling

³Bear Your cross as You wait for your
Crown
Tell the world of the treasure You found

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. **Amen**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink. Strengthen us for service, and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ we pray, **Amen.**

BLESSING

The Spirit of the triune God ☩ bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

Go Out With Joy

W&P #48

Go out with joy and be led forth in peace,
The mountains and the hills shall break forth singing.
And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands,
The Lord Almighty shall be praised,
And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands,
The Word of the Lord shall be forever.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dismissal

Go in peace. Live in hope.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

TUESDAY: 6:30 pm AA Meeting
THURSDAY: 7:30 pm Band practice
SATURDAY: 9:00 am- 2:00 pm Council Retreat
SUNDAY: 9:00 am Choir practice
10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Fellowship

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES NEXT SUNDAY

Transfiguration of Our Lord, Last Sunday after Epiphany, March 2, 2025
10:00am Worship Service

FEBRUARY BENEVOLENCE OF THE MONTH
St. Paul's Community Development Center

TODAY'S MINISTERS

PASTOR: Rev. Courtney Smith Westerlund

MUSIC DIRECTOR: Bob Luderer

BAND MEMBERS: Jerri Angermueller, Klaus Angermueller, Nick DeRoda, Nancy Krause, Steve Krause, Chris Kania

ASSISTING MINISTER/LAY READER: Megan Rotella

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS: Michele Weintraub & Susanne Herbst

VIDEO TECH: Alex Boyce/Nick DeRoda

USHER: Cesar Rios

GREETER: Linda Axtell

ALTAR GUILD: Marilyn Rubner & Kristen Rios

FLOWER GUILD: Nancy Krause

COUNTERS: Nancy Krause & Cesar Rios

COORDINATING COUNCILOR: Nancy Krause

COFFEE HOUR: Linda Axtell

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Messiah Singers Practice Schedule:

Join us at 9:00 am before worship to start singing again. Here are the rehearsal dates: 3/2, 3/9, 3/19, 3/30. Please talk to Bob if you have questions or want to get involved.

Lent in a Bag:

Please look for our "build your own Lent in a Bag" to be available next week. A variety of devotionals, prayer practices, and activities will be available for you to pick and choose what you'd like to use this Lenten season.

Ash Wednesday: March 5th! Ashes to Go will be outside from 4-6 pm and worship will be at 7:30 pm on-site and online.

Movie Night(s): Movie will start at 4:30, you're invited to bring a dish to share for a potluck dinner afterwards

March 9th: Inside Out (Family Friendly):

Inside Out is a 2015 Disney Pixar film that explores the emotions of an 11-year-old girl named Riley as she moves from Minnesota to San Francisco. The movie takes place in Riley's mind, where her emotions live in Headquarters, the control center that guides her through life.

March 23rd: The Thorn (PG-13):

The Thorn is a theatrical production that tells the story of Jesus Christ and the spiritual battle for humanity. The show combines dance, martial arts, acrobatics, and music to share the story of God's love for the world.



Please keep in prayer the following people in our Messiah family: Joan B, Helen, Mike, Kim, Len, Karl, and Jonny & Natalie.

And the following friends and family:

All affected by seasonal illnesses

Jeff Cresci

David

Kurt

Peter

Mark and Keith, Susanne's friends

Gayle, friend of Joan & Eleanore

June, Lee's mother

Miro, Vesna's father

Erika, Kristen's sister

John, Joan, Herb, Todd, Gus, Peggy, Jim, Kathy W. and Carol, Ron and Marilyn's friends

Ethel and Mickey, Brigitte's sister-in-law and friend

Kim, friend of Sue

Marilyn & Vincent, Lisa's parents

Ron & June, Karen's parents

Melinda & Paul, Eleanore's sister & nephew