

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



Second Sunday of Easter

April 27, 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 TO WORSHIP

CONFESSIONS AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who looks upon us in compassion, forgives our sin, and heals our lives.

Amen.

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

Have mercy, O God, against you, you alone, we have sinned. In your compassion, cleanse us from our sin and take away our guilt. Create in us a new heart and give us a steadfast spirit. Do not cast us away, but fill us with your Holy Spirit and restore your joy within us. Amen.

As tender as parent to child, so deep is God's compassion for us. As high as heaven is above earth, so vast is God's love for us. As far as east is from west, so far God removes our sin from us, renewing our life through Jesus Christ.

Blessed be God who crowns us with mercy and love.

Blessed be God forever.

GATHERING HYMN

King of Kings

W&P #80

King of kings and Lord of lords: glory, hallelujah.

King of kings and Lord of lords: glory, hallelujah.

Jesus, Prince of Peace: glory, hallelujah.

Jesus, Prince of Peace: glory, hallelujah. (x3)

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 God of life, you reach out to us amid our fears with the wounded hands of your risen Son. By your Spirit's breath revive our faith in your mercy, and strengthen us to be the body of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

FIRST READING: A Reading from **Acts 5:27-32**

²⁷ When they had brought [the apostles], they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us." ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than any human authority. ³⁰ The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

THE PSALM: **Psalm 118:14-29** will be read responsively

¹⁴ The LORD is my strength and my song, and has become my salvation.

¹⁵ **Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"**

¹⁶ The right hand of the LORD is exalted! The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

¹⁷ **I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.**

¹⁸ The LORD indeed punished me sorely, but did not hand me over to death.

¹⁹ **Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.**

²⁰ "This is the gate of the LORD; here the righteous may enter."

²¹ **I give thanks to you, for you have answered me and you have become my salvation.**

²² The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

²³ **By the LORD has this been done; it is marvelous in our eyes.**

²⁴ This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

²⁵ **Hosanna! O LORD, save us! We pray to you, LORD, prosper our days!**

²⁶ Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD; we bless you from the house of the LORD.

²⁷ **The LORD is God and has given us light. Form a procession with branches up to the corners of the altar.**

²⁸ You are my God, and I will thank you; you are my God, and I will exalt you.

²⁹ **Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good; God's mercy endures forever.**

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

THE GOSPEL: The Holy Gospel according to **John 20:19-31**
Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." ²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." ²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." ³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Cross Roads Camp & Retreat

SERMON

WE RESPOND TO GOD

¹Touch that soothes and heals the hurting,
hands that break a loaf of bread;
steps that walk beside the weary,
bearing burdens in their stead:

Refrain

"See my hands and feet," said Jesus,
love arisen from the grave.
"Be my hands and feet," said Jesus,
"live as ones I died to save."

²Feed the hungry, clothe the naked,
visit ones in need of care,
give the homeless warmth and shelter:
Christ will find a welcome there.

Refrain

³Love and serve without distinction
all earth's people, first and least.
Know within each act of kindness
hope and wholeness are increased.
Refrain

⁴Hands that beckon little children,
bind a wound, prepare a meal,
feet that rush to share good tidings,
Christ arisen, still reveal. *Refrain*

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 and
our Pastor, Courtney

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

Create in Me a Clean Heart

W&P #34

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence, O Lord, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of your salvation and renew a right spirit within me.

OFFERING PRAYER

Risen One, you have gathered us around your table of grace along with these gifts we bring. Come among us again, breathe your life into us, and enliven us with this meal, that we may live as your risen body in the world. **Amen.**

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Let us pray. O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. **Amen.**

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

BLESSING

The Lord watch over your going out and your coming in, from this time forth forevermore. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

I Will Call Upon the Lord

W&P #70

I will call upon the Lord
who is worthy to be praised.
So shall I be saved from my enemies.
I will call upon the Lord.

The Lord liveth, and blessed be the Rock,
and let the God of my salvation be exalted.
The Lord liveth, and blessed be the Rock,
and let the God of my salvation be exalted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minute for Mission: Cross Roads Camp & Retreat Center

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. In Christ you are made new. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER, May 4, 2025
10:00am Worship Service

THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

TUESDAY: 6:30 pm AA Meeting
THURSDAY: 12:00 pm Bible Study
7:30 pm Band practice
SUNDAY: 10:00 am Worship
11:00 am Choir Meeting
12:00 pm Game Time

APRIL BENEVOLENCE OF THE MONTH ELCA World Hunger

TODAY'S MINISTERS

PASTOR: Rev. Courtney Smith Westerlund
MUSIC DIRECTOR: Bob Luderer
LAY LEADER: Eleanore Orman & Michele Weintraub
BAND: Jerri Angermueller, Klaus Angermueller, Nick DeRoda, Nancy Krause, Steve Krause, Chris Kania
LAY READER: Megan Rotella
VIDEO TECH: Alex Boyce
USHER: Len Nicolosi
GREETER: Megan Rotella
ALTAR GUILD: Marilyn Rubner & Kristen Rios
COUNTERS: Eleanore Orman & Tony Baglieri
COORDINATING COUNCILOR: Sue Boyce
COFFEE HOUR: Sue Boyce

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Choir:

There will be a brief choir meeting after Worship on May 4th at 11AM to determine interest in continuing choir practices with the goal of a musical offering in June.

ELCA Good Gifts/ God's Global Barnyard:

Return your piggy banks by the end of the month!

Wash Away Hunger Car Wash Fundraiser:

On Saturday, May 3rd, 10am - 2pm, we will be partnering with Ponds and St Albans to host a car wash. All proceeds will be split between our various ministries to fight hunger. We need volunteers beyond washing cars so if you think manning the snack table is your speed, we can use your special talent. Look for the sign-up at church.

It is also the day of the Oakland town-wide garage sale and we've been added to the map. If you have some items you would like to donate to the cause, bring them on the morning of the 3rd and we'll mark them for sale. Any items left will be donated to various charities.

Game Time: Sunday, May 4th

Bring some lunch, your favorite game, and stick around after the worship service. Some games will be provided but feel free to bring your favorites to share. All are welcome for this fun intergenerational event!

Special Program for Mother's Day:

As a way to honor your mother, grandmother, godmother, aunt or other special woman in your life, we'd like to have a special bulletin insert on Mother's Day with a list of your loved ones who are either a presence in your life now or someone you hold dear in your heart and memory. If you would like, you may make a donation of \$1.00 per name (or whatever amount you wish) which will go to Pastor Courtney's Discretionary Fund. Please mark your check or envelope with a notation of "Mother's Day" to assist our counters. Forms for names to include will be in the bulletins prior to May 11th. The deadline for the inclusion of your chosen names will be May 4th. We will also do the same special bulletin for Father's Day for all the special men in your lives.

Book Club:

We will be meeting via Zoom on the 3rd Monday of each month. On May 19, Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt and on June 16, The Color Purple by Alice Walker. Please contact Valerie Nicolosi with any questions and/or suggestions for books to read! Our discussions have been very enlightening and enthusiastic.

Herb Curb:

On Sunday, May 25th, for Sunday School we will redo the area near the entrance, some of which was torn up from the new garden fence. We hope to have it all deer resistant to mulch it to make maintenance easier. It'll be nice flowers for pollinators that will come for the lavender blossoms and stay for the zucchini flowers to make the garden more productive. It isn't something that needs to be done the following year since I hope to plant mostly perennials or plants that will reseed. Please contact Linda Axtell with any questions.

Coffee Hour June 8th:

The coffee hour will be devoted to hearing your ideas for the distribution of funds acquired from the sale of the Perzin property. As good stewards of the bounty we have received, we will be tithing, giving 10% of what we have received, to organizations and projects that need our support. The Council's plan is to donate \$5,000 per year for the next ten years to a variety of projects both large and small. Eleanore Orman and Valerie Nicolosi have met as members of this committee and are seeking the congregation's input. We want to be able to explore ways Messiah can be helpful in our community and the world beyond. If you have any questions, please speak to Valerie or Eleanore. Please think about your priorities for these funds and join us on June 8th after worship.

Sundaes on Sunday:

On June 22nd marking the end of Sunday School and another school year for our children (and parents too!) Look for a sign-up sheet in the narthex with a listing of all the goodies you might like to bring. This event was a real hit last year for both young and old (or getting older) congregants.



**Please keep in prayer the following people in our
Messiah family:** Joan B, Helen, Mike, Kim, Len, 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. & Carol, Rubner'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

Thomas Caraglia, friend of Tony & Edie

The Smith family, grieving the death of Ted