

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



**Fifth Sunday of Easter  
Service of Holy Communion**

May 18, 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**

**CONFESSION 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 you. As high as heaven is above earth, so vast is God's love for you. As far as east is from west, so far God removes your sin from you, renewing your life through Jesus Christ. Blessed be God who crowns us with mercy and love. **Blessed be God forever.**



1 Ye watch - ers and ye ho - ly ones, bright  
 2 O high - er than the cher - u - bim, more  
 3 Re - spond, ye souls in end - less rest, ye  
 4 O friends, in glad - ness let us sing, su -



ser - apts, cher - u - bim, and thrones, raise the glad strain:  
 glo - rious than the ser - a - phim, lead their prais - es:  
 pa - tri - archs and proph - ets blest: "Al - le - lu - ia!  
 per - nal an - thems ech - o - ing: "Al - le - lu - ia!



"Al - le - lu - ia!" Cry out, do - min - ions, prince - doms,  
 "Al - le - lu - ia!" Thou bear - er of the e - ter - nal  
 Al - le - lu - ia!" Ye ho - ly twelve, ye mar - tyrs  
 Al - le - lu - ia!" To God the Fa - ther, God the



pow'rs, arch - an - gels, vir - tues, an - gel choirs:  
 Word, most gra - cious, mag - ni - fy the Lord:  
 strong, all saints tri - um - phant, raise the song:  
 Son, and God the Spir - it, Three in One:



"Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!" Al - le -



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

## 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 God, you teach us that without love, our actions gain nothing. Pour into our hearts your most excellent gift of love, that, made alive by your Spirit, we may know goodness and peace, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## KYRIE

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord have mercy.**

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord have mercy.**

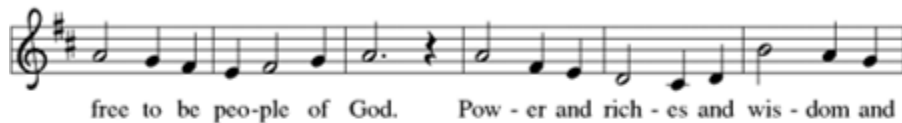
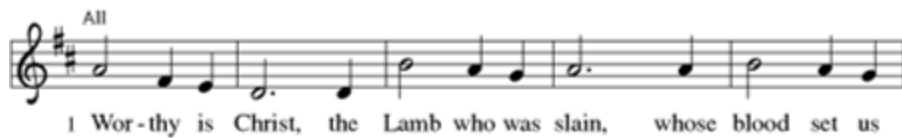
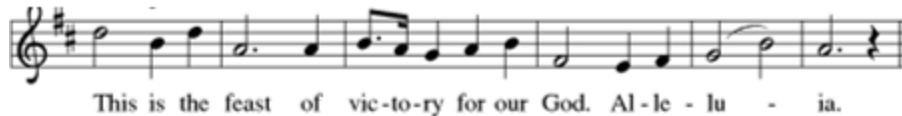
For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort and defend us, gracious Lord. **Amen.**

## HYMN OF PRAISE

### *This Is the Feast*

ELW pg. 149



## FIRST READING: A Reading from Acts 11:1-18

<sup>1</sup> Now the apostles and the brothers and sisters who were in Judea heard that the gentiles had also accepted the word of God. <sup>2</sup> So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, <sup>3</sup> saying, “Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?” <sup>4</sup> Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, <sup>5</sup> “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners, and it came close to me. <sup>6</sup> As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. <sup>7</sup> I also heard a voice saying to me, ‘Get up, Peter; kill and eat.’ <sup>8</sup> But I replied, ‘By no means, Lord, for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ <sup>9</sup> But a second time the voice answered from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, you must not call profane.’ <sup>10</sup> This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. <sup>11</sup> At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. <sup>12</sup> The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. <sup>13</sup> He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; <sup>14</sup> he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.’ <sup>15</sup> And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. <sup>16</sup> And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>17</sup> If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?” <sup>18</sup> When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, “Then God has given even to the gentiles the repentance that leads to life.”

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**THE PSALM: Psalm 148** will be read responsively

<sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise God in the heights.

<sup>2</sup> **Praise the LORD, all you angels; sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

<sup>3</sup> Praise the LORD, sun and moon; sing praise, all you shining stars.

<sup>4</sup> **Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.**

<sup>5</sup> Let them praise the name of the LORD, who commanded, and they were created,

<sup>6</sup> **who made them stand fast forever and ever, giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

<sup>7</sup> Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps;

<sup>8</sup> **fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing God’s will;**

<sup>9</sup> mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

<sup>10</sup> **wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds;**

<sup>11</sup> sovereigns of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;

<sup>12</sup> **young men and maidens, old and young together.**

<sup>13</sup> Let them praise the name of the LORD, whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

<sup>14</sup> **The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD.**  
**Hallelujah!**

## **SECOND READING: A Reading from Revelation 21:1-6**

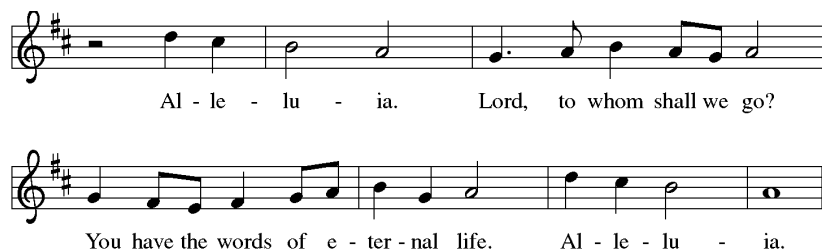
<sup>1</sup> I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and be their God; <sup>4</sup> he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." <sup>5</sup> And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." <sup>6</sup> Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life."

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

ELW pg. 151



## **THE GOSPEL: The Holy Gospel according to John 13:31-35**

### **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>31</sup> When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. <sup>32</sup> If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. <sup>33</sup> Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' <sup>34</sup> I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **CHILDREN'S SERMON**

### **SERMON**

## WE RESPOND TO GOD

HYMN OF THE DAY

*Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*

ELW #631



1 Love di-vine, all loves ex-cel-ling, Joy of heav'n, to  
 2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov-ing Spir-it in-to ev-'ry  
 3 Come, Al-might-y, to de-liv-er; let us all thy  
 4 Fin-ish then thy new cre-a-tion, pure and spot-less



earth come down! Fix in us thy hum-ble dwell-ing, all thy  
 trou-bled breast; let us all in thee in-her-it; let us  
 life re-ceive; sud-den-ly re-turn, and nev-er, nev-er-  
 let us be; let us see thy great sal-va-tion per-fect-



faith-ful mer-cies crown. Je-sus, thou art all com-pas-sion,  
 find thy prom-ised rest. Take a-way the love of sin-ning;  
 more thy tem-ples leave. Thee we would be al-ways bless-ing,  
 ly re-stored in thee! Changed from glo-ry in-to glo-ry,



pure, un-bound-ed love thou art; vis-it us with  
 Al-pha and O-me-ga be; end of faith, as  
 serve thee as thy hosts a-bove, pray, and praise thee  
 till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our



thy sal-va-tion, en-ter ev-'ry trem-bling heart.  
 its be-gin-ning, set our hearts at lib-er-ty.  
 with-out ceas-ing, glo-ry in thy per-fect love.  
 crowns be-fore thee, lost in won-der, love, and praise!

### 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 INTERCESSION

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

## 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, sent to the church office, or given online by using the QR code.*



## OFFERTORY

### *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful*

ELW #184

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

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.**

## DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

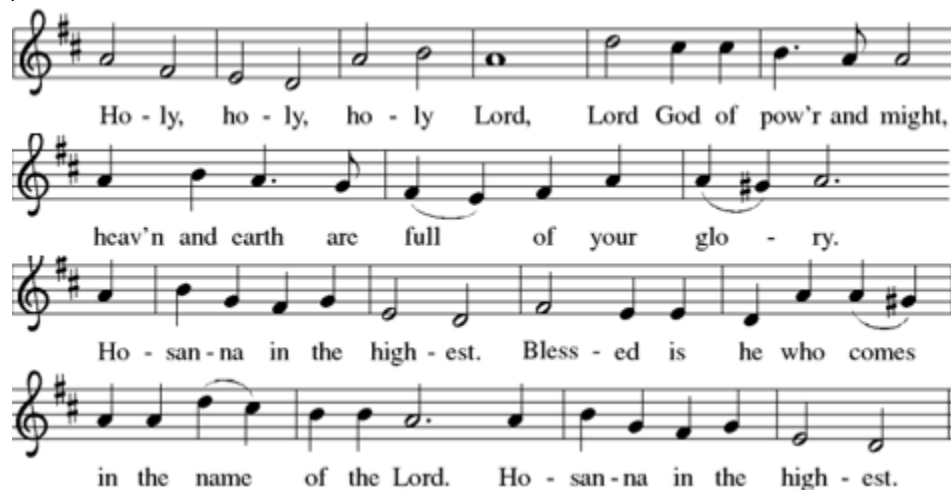
Lift up your hearts.

**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



## 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

**All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread. Amen.**

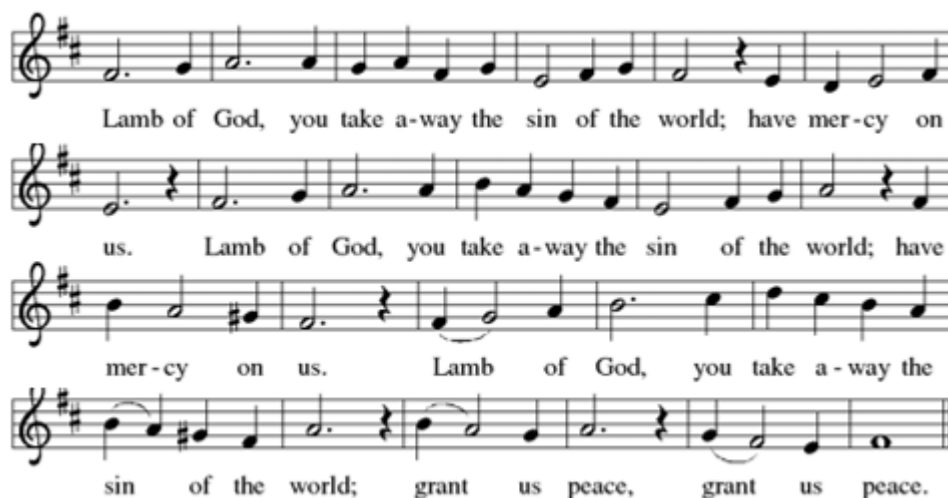
### COMMUNION

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

### *Lamb of God*





Anointing fall on me. ( x2)

Let the power of the Holy Ghost fall on me. Anointing fall on me.

### TABLE BLESSING

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

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Living One, in this feast you have made yourself known to us. Send us now to tell of your wonders, sing of your glory, and proclaim your risen life to a wounded and weary world. **Amen.**

### BLESSING

The triune God, who was, who is, and who is to come, Sovereign, ☩ Savior, and Spirit, light your way with resurrection dawn, now and always. **Amen.**

### SENDING HYMN

#### Christ Has Risen, Alleluia

ELW #364

*M - fu - ra - hi - ni, ha - le - lu - ya,*  
 1 Christ has a - ris - en, al - le - lu - ia.  
 2 For three long days the grave did its worst  
 3 The an - gel said to them, "Do not fear.

*m - ko - mbo - zi a - me - fu - fu - ka.*  
 Re - joice and praise him, al - le - lu - ia.  
 un - til its strength by God was dis - persed.  
 You look for Je - sus who is not here.

*A - me - fu - fu - ka, ha - le - lu - ya,*  
 For our re - deem - er burst from the tomb,  
 He who gives life did death un - der - go,  
 See for your - selves the tomb is all bare.

*m - si - fu - ni sa - sa yu ha - i.*  
 e - ven from death, dis - pel - ling its gloom.  
 and in its con - quest his might did show.  
 On - ly the grave - clothes are ly - ing there."

*Refrain*  
*Tu - mwi - mbi - e so - te kwa fu - ra - ha.*  
 Let us sing praise to him with end - less joy.

*Ye - su a - me - to - ka ka - bu - ri - ni.*  
 Death's fear - ful sting he has come to de - stroy.

*Ka - shi - nda ki - fo, ha - le - lu - ya;*  
 Our sin for - giv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!

*ha - le - lu - ya, Ye - su yu ha - i.*  
 Je - sus is liv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!

4 "Go spread the news: he's not in the grave.  
 He has arisen this world to save.  
 Jesus' redeeming labors are done.  
 Even the battle with sin is won."  
*Refrain*

5 Christ has arisen to set us free.  
 Alleluia, to him praises be.  
 Jesus is living! Let us all sing;  
 he reigns triumphant, heavenly king.  
*Refrain*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **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**

### **SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER |SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Sunday, May 25, 2025  
10:00am Worship Service

### **THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH**

TUESDAY: 6:30 pm AA Meeting  
7:30 pm Council Meeting on Zoom  
THURSDAY: 7:30 pm Band practice  
SUNDAY: 10:00 am Worship

### **MAY BENEVOLENCE OF THE MONTH**

Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center

### **TODAY'S MINISTERS**

**PASTOR:** Rev. Courtney Smith Westerlund  
**MUSIC DIRECTOR:** Bob Luderer  
**GUEST PASTOR:** Rev. Maristela Freiberg  
**LAY READER:** Nancy Krause  
**COMMUNION ASSISTANTS:** Jerri Angermuller & Arnold Ludke  
**VIDEO TECH:** Alex Boyce  
**USHER:** Tony Baglieri  
**GREETER:** Brigitte Albrecht  
**ALTAR GUILD:** Nancy Krause & Jerri Angermuller  
**COUNTERS:** Linda Axtell & Joan Ludke  
**COORDINATING COUNCILOR:** Sue Boyce  
**COFFEE HOUR:** Cooper DeGregorio from Thrivent

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Book Club:

We will be meeting via Zoom on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month. Tomorrow, on May 19, we will discuss 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 8<sup>th</sup>:

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 8<sup>th</sup> after worship.

### Sundaes on Sunday:

On June 22<sup>nd</sup> 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

Thomas Caraglia, friend of Tony & Edie

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

Ethel & 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