

# MESSIAH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A faithful, serving community, joyfully sharing Christ's love.



**Fourth Sunday of Easter**

April 26, 2026

228 Ramapo Valley Rd, Oakland NJ 07436

www.messiahoaklandnj.org | 201-337-4900

@MessiahOaklandNJ

Sunday Worship 10:00 am

*The congregation is invited to worship in any way that is comfortable and meaningful such as standing, sitting, kneeling, coloring, etc. You may join in worship by speaking the responses in bold type.*

## SILENT MEDITATION DURING PRELUDE

### WELCOME

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

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

### GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

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 our shepherd, you know your sheep by name and lead us to safety through the valleys of death. Guide us by your voice, that we may walk in certainty and security to the joyous feast prepared in your house, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## **FIRST READING: A Reading from Acts 2:42-47**

<sup>42</sup> [The baptized] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.<sup>43</sup> Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. <sup>44</sup> All who believed were together and had all things in common; <sup>45</sup> they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**THE PSALM: Psalm 23** will be read responsively

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

<sup>2</sup> **The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.**

<sup>3</sup> You restore my soul, O LORD, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> **Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

<sup>6</sup> **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

ELW #172

Halle, halle, hallelujah. x3

Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

**THE GOSPEL: The Holy Gospel according to John 10:1-10  
Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:]<sup>1</sup> “Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit.<sup>2</sup> The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.<sup>3</sup> The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.<sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.<sup>5</sup> They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.”<sup>6</sup> Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.<sup>7</sup> So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.<sup>8</sup> All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them.<sup>9</sup> I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture.<sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**CHILDREN’S SERMON**

**SERMON**

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

Baptized in the Water

ELW #456

<sup>1</sup>Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit,  
cleansed by the blood of Christ our king:  
heirs of salvation, trusting his promise,  
faithfully now God's praise we sing.

<sup>2</sup>Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit,  
dead in the tomb with Christ our king:  
one with his rising, freed and forgiven,  
thankfully now God's praise we sing.

<sup>3</sup>Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit,  
marked with the sign of Christ our king:  
born of the Spirit, we are God's children;  
joyfully now God's praise we sing.

<sup>4</sup>Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit,  
cleansed by the blood of Christ our king:  
heirs of salvation, trusting his promise,  
faithfully now God's praise we sing.

## HOLY BAPTISM OF LEONARD ETHAN AND CASSIA ALAINE

*Those participating in the baptism gather at the font.*

God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word, God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.

Cassia Alaine, called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to be baptized into Christ? **I do.**

Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have Leonard Ethan baptized? **We do.**

As you receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:

to live among God's faithful people,  
engage with the word of God and come to the holy supper,  
teach the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten  
Commandments,  
place in each other's hands the holy scriptures,  
and nurture a life of faith and prayer,  
so that you may learn to trust God  
and tell people about Jesus by what you say and do.  
As you grow in the church and  
through the guidance of loved ones,  
you will learn to care for others  
by seeking after justice and peace;  
and by caring for all of God's Creation.

*Pastor addresses the family and sponsors.*

Family and Sponsors, do you promise to nurture Lenny and Cassie in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, and to help them live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church? **We do.**

*Pastor addresses the assembly.*

People of God, do you promise to support Lenny and Cassie and to pray for them in their new life in Christ? **We do.**

## **PROFESSION OF FAITH**

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church. Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God? Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God? Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God? **I renounce them.**

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**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.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

## **THANKSGIVING AT THE FONT**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

We give you thanks, O God,

for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.

At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word,

that those who are washed in the waters of baptism  
may be given new life.

To you be given honor and praise  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

## **BAPTISM**

Cassia Alaine, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and the Son,  
and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**You belong to Christ, in whom you have been baptized. Alleluia.**

Leonard Ethan, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and the Son,  
and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**You belong to Christ, in whom you have been baptized. Alleluia.**

Let us pray. We give thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy  
Spirit you give your children new birth, cleanse them from sin, and  
raise them to eternal life.

*Pastor lays hands and prays:*

Sustain Leonard Ethan and Cassie Alaine with the gift of your Holy  
Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel  
and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of  
joy in your presence, both now and forever. **Amen.**

*As the sign of the cross is made, the pastor says:*

Leonard Ethan, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit  
and marked with the cross of Christ forever. **Amen.**

Cassie Alaine, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit  
and marked with the cross of Christ forever. **Amen.**

## **WELCOME**

*A lighted candle is presented.*

Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good  
works and glorify God in heaven. **We welcome you into the body of  
Christ and into the mission we share:**

**join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's  
creative and redeeming word to all the world.**

*Applause of welcome/please sit*

## **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, Yehiel and Christa, and 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 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, such as a handshake, hug, or peace sign 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 to the right.*



## 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

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.**

## 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

Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord.



## 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**            God Extends an Invitation            ELW #486

God extends an invitation to the table of creation,  
where there's wine and light and bread.

Here we gather in thanksgiving and we offer all our living.  
Here the feast of life is spread; here the feast of life is spread.

**COMMUNION HYMN**            *O Come to the Altar*            Elevation Worship

<sup>1</sup>Are 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

<sup>2</sup>Leave 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. Chorus

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

<sup>3</sup>Bear 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

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, **Amen.**

## **BLESSING**

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. **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. X2

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia! **Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

### **POSTLUDE**

## **UPCOMING WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

Fifth Sunday of Easter, May 3, 2026  
10:00am Worship Service

## **APRIL BENEVOLENCE OF THE MONTH**

His Helping Hands

## **THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH**

TUESDAY: 6:30 pm AA Meeting  
THURSDAY: 7:30 pm Band practice  
SATURDAY: Property Work Day  
9:00 am Youth Activity  
SUNDAY: 9:00 am Choir practice  
10:00 am Worship

## TODAY'S MINISTERS

**PASTOR:** Rev. Courtney Smith  
Westerlund

**MUSIC DIRECTOR:** Bob Luderer

**BAND MEMBERS:** Jerri  
Angermueller, Klaus  
Angermueller, Nick DeRoda,  
Nancy Krause, Steve Krause,  
and Jack

**LAY READER:** Eleanore Orman

**USHER:** Arnold Ludke

**GREETER:** Brigitte Albrecht

**COMMUNION ASSISTANTS:** Brigitte  
Albrecht & Susanne Herbst

**ALTAR GUILD:** Brigitte Albrecht &  
Susanne Herbst

**FLOWER GUILD:** Brigitte Albrecht

**VIDEO TECH:** Nick DeRoda/ Don  
Brown

**COUNTERS:** Nancy Krause &  
Arnold Ludke

**COORDINATING COUNCILOR:**  
Eleanore Orman

**COFFEE HOUR:** Axtell

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Youth Communion Bread Baking: Sat. May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9am-noon, all kids welcome!  
Join us as we bake some communion bread for Sunday Worship,  
as well as some special snacks and have a fun time together.

Community Thrift Shop of Midland Park: A sign up sheet is in the narthex  
for volunteering at the Community Thrift Shop of Midland Park. Shifts are  
on April 28<sup>th</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup>. Reach out to Marilyn for more information!

Book Club on Zoom at 7:00 pm:

May 11 : "A Woman of No Importance" by Sonia Purnell

Special Program for Mother's Day: To honor a special woman in your  
life, we will have a special bulletin insert on Mother's Day with a list of  
your loved ones. If you would like, you may donate \$1.00 per name (or  
whatever amount you wish) which will go to Pastor's Discretionary Fund.  
Please mark your check or envelope with notation of "Mother's Day" to  
assist our counters. Forms to fill out will be on table next to bulletins and  
are due back by May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center:

Register for both opening day on May 16<sup>th</sup> and camp for this summer!  
For more information visit: <https://www.crossroadsretreat.com/>

Ponds Food Pantry: Spring Stock Up, help fill the shelves!

Drop off at hrs: Tuesday 10-1, Thursday 3-7 and Saturday 10-1.  
Please see QR code on the right to see their Amazon Wish List.



Ray Cordell Concert to Benefit Ponds Food Pantry:

Saturday, May 30th, 2026 from 7 to 9 pm at Ponds Reformed Church  
Enjoy a magical evening of music featuring international recording artist and singer Ray Cordell, aka "Ray from the UK" performing popular jazz, light rock and rock-n-roll from the 70s to today. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased using the QR code to the right. In addition to the concert, there will be a trick tray and refreshments. Messiah Lutheran will contribute a "Coffee Hour" basket to the tricky tray. Please see the sign-up sheet in the narthex listing items to donate to the tricky tray and talk to Michele Weintraub with questions.



**Please keep in prayer the following people in our Messiah family:** Bob, Helen, Jonny & Natalie, Kim, Len, Mike, Sue and Alex.

**And the following friends and family:**

All affected by seasonal illnesses	Alexa and Hank friends of Nancy
All those in the armed forces, especially those connected to our congregation including Evan and Joseph	Gayle, friend of Joan & Eleanore
Erika, Kristen's sister	Janice, food pantry volunteer
June, Lee's mother	Jennifer, friend of Sue & Eleanore
Keith, Karen & Clyde, Valerie's brother and friends	Joan, friend of Ron and Marilyn
Marilyn & Vincent, Lisa's parents	John, Joan, Herb, Todd, Gus, Peggy, Jim, Kathy, and Carol, Ron and Marilyn's friends
Melinda & Paul, Eleanore's sister & nephew	Karol & Barbara, Eleanore's friends
Miro, Vesna's father	Kim, friend of Sue
Ron & June, Karen's parents	Mark and Keith, Susanne's friends
Nancy, friend of Kim	Michele H., friend of Weintraub's
Paula, friend of Nancy	Peter, Terri's father; Julie, family friend of Nancy
Peggy & Christine, Alex's aunts	Thomas, friend of Tony & Edie

\*Please let us know if you have changes we should make to our prayer list\*