

MESSIAH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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



Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 3, 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 TO WORSHIP

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.



1 Lord God, we praise you, now the night is o - ver, ac - tive and
 2 Mon - arch of all things, fit us for your man - sions; ban - ish our
 3 All - ho - ly Fa - ther, Son, and e - qual Spir - it, Trin - i - ty



watch - ful, stand - ing here be - fore you; sing - ing, we of - fer
 weak - ness, health and whole - ness send - ing; bring us to heav - en,
 bless - ed, send us your sal - va - tion; yours is the glo - ry,



prayer and med - i - ta - tion; thus we a - dore you.
 where your saints u - nit - ed joy with - out end - ing.
 gleam - ing and re - sound - ing through all cre - a - tion.

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

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life.
 Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his
 commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he
 lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and
 forever. **Amen.**

Refrain
Assisting minister



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.

All



1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

FIRST READING: A Reading from Acts 7:55-60

⁵⁵ Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.⁵⁶ “Look,” he said, “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!”⁵⁷ But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him.⁵⁸ Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him, and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.⁵⁹ While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he died.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

THE PSALM: 31:1-5, 15-16 will be read responsively

¹ In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness.

² **Incline your ear to me; make haste to deliver me.**

³ Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag and my stronghold; for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.

⁴ **Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me, for you are my tower of strength.**

⁵ Into your hands I commend my spirit, for you have redeemed me, O LORD, God of truth.

¹⁵ **My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.**

¹⁶ Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.”

SECOND READING: A Reading from 1 Peter 2:2-10

² Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.⁴ Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and ⁵ like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.⁶ For it stands in scripture: “See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”⁷ This honor, then, is for you who believe, but for those who do

not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,”⁸ and “A stone that makes them stumble and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW pg.151

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
 You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

THE GOSPEL: The Holy Gospel according to **John 14:1-14**
Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:]¹ “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.² In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.⁴ And you know the way to the place where I am going.”⁵ Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?”⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.⁷ If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”⁸ Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, but if you do not, then believe because of the works themselves. ¹² Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Hope of the World

ACS #1085



1 Hope of the world, O Christ of great com - pas - sion,
 2 Hope of the world, God’s gift from high - est heav - en,
 3 Hope of the world, a - foot on dust - y high - ways,
 4 Hope of the world, who by your cross did save us
 5 Hope of the world, Christ ris’n from death vic - to - rious,



speak to our fear - ful hearts by con - flict rent.
 bring - ing to hun - gry souls the bread of life:
 show - ing to wan - d’ring souls the path of light:
 from death and deep de - spair, from guilt and sin:
 who by this tri - umph con - quered grief and pain:



Save us, your peo - ple, from con - sum - ing pas - sion,
 still let your Spir - it un - to us be giv - en
 walk close be - side us lest the tempt - ing by - ways
 we ren - der back the love your mer - cy gave us;
 we would be faith - ful to your gos - pel glo - rious:



who by our own false hopes and aims are spent.
 to heal earth’s wounds and end all bit - ter strife.
 lure us a - way from you to end - less night.
 work through our lives to bring your pur - pose in.
 you are our Lord and will for - ev - er reign!

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: THE NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

God, in your grace, **Tend to our prayers.**

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*Let the Vinyards Be Fruitful*

ELW #184



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bles-sing. 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

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

COMMUNION RESPONSE

Holy Holy Holy

ELW pg.153

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
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.

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**Lamb of God**

ELW pg.154



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



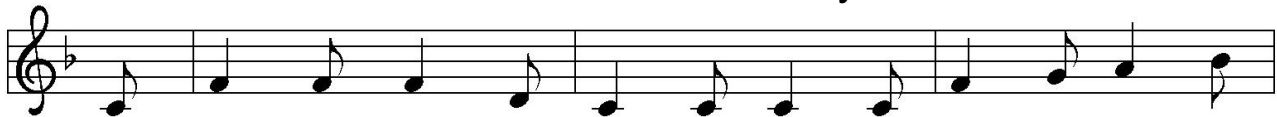
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN**I Come With Joy**

ELW #482



1 I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and
 2 I come with Chris - tians far and near to find, as all are
 3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud di - vi - sion
 4 The Spir - it of the ris - en Christ, un - seen, but ev - er
 5 To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound by all that God has



free, the life of Je - sus to re - call in
 fed, the new com - mu - ni - ty of love in
 ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and
 near, is in such friend - ship bet - ter known, a -
 done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the



love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.
 Christ's com - mu - nion bread, in Christ's com - mu - nion bread.
 strang - ers now are friends, and strang - ers now are friends.
 live a - mong us here, a - live a - mong us here.
 love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.

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

Hallelujah Jesus Lives

ELW #380



1 Hal-le - lu - jah! Je - sus lives! He is now the Liv - ing One;
2 Je - sus lives! Why do you weep? Why that sad and mourn - ful sigh?
3 Je - sus lives! And thus, my soul, life e - ter - nal waits for you;
4 Je - sus lives! Let all re - joice. Praise him, ran - somed of the earth.
5 Hal-le - lu - jah! An - gels, sing! Join with us in hymns of praise.



from the gloom - y halls of death Christ, the con - quer - or, has gone,
Christ who died our broth - er here lives our broth - er still on high,
joined to Christ, your liv - ing head, where he is, you shall be too;
Praise him in a no - bler song, cher - u - bim of heav'n - ly birth.
Let your cho - rus swell the strain which our fee - bler voic - es raise:



bright fore - run - ner to the skies of his peo - ple, yet to rise.
lives for - ev - er to be - stow bless - ings on his church be - low.
with the Lord, at God's right hand, as a vic - tor you shall stand.
Praise the vic - tor king, whose sway sin and death and hell o - bey.
Glo - ry to our God a - bove and on earth his peace and love!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE

THANK YOU TO LINDA AND EVERYONE WHO BAKED COMMUNION BREAD!

UPCOMING WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Sixth Sunday of Easter, May 10, 2026 | 10:00am Worship Service

MAY BENEVOLENCE OF THE MONTH

Cross Roads Camp and Retreat

THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

MONDAY: 6:00 pm Community Table at Ponds

TUESDAY: 6:30 pm AA Meeting

THURSDAY: 12:00 pm Bible Study

7:30 pm Band practice

SATURDAY: 3:30 pm Wedding of Brian and Kenia

SUNDAY: 9:00 am Choir practice

10:00 am Worship

TODAY'S MINISTERS

PASTOR: Rev. Courtney Smith
Westerlund

MUSIC DIRECTOR: Bob Luderer

GUEST ORGANIST: Robin Van Dyk

LAY READER: Valerie Nicolosi

USHER: Tony Baglieri

GREETER: Len Nicolosi

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS: Brigitte
Albrecht & Susanne Herbst

ALTAR GUILD: Marilyn Rubner

FLOWER GUILD: Nancy Krause

VIDEO TECH: Nick DeRoda/
Don Brown

COUNTERS: Eleanore Orman &
Tony Baglieri

COORDINATING COUNCILOR:

Valerie Nicolosi

COFFEE HOUR: Brigitte Albrecht

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Special Program for Mother's Day: Last call to honor a special woman in your life, with the 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 the table in the narthex and due today!

Wedding Announcement: Please join us for the wedding ceremony of Brian and Kenia on Saturday, May 9th at 3:30 pm here at church.

Coloring and Conversation: May 14th at 12:00 pm. Join us for an opportunity to reflect together on transitions using elements of Bible Study, Art & Theology, and conversation. All are welcome. If you can't attend but want the materials, please talk to Pastor Courtney.

Important Dates to Note:

May 17th: Pastor Courtney's Final Worship Service

Please gather outside after worship for a farewell celebration and games!

May 24th: Bob Luderer's Final Worship Service

Please join us after worship for a Farewell Coffee Hour in celebration of his 20 years serving Messiah Lutheran! Please contact Nancy Krause or Michele Weintraub with questions.

First Communion May 17th: Please talk to Pastor Courtney if you are interested in participating in First Holy Communion. Instruction will be given in Sunday School, and the celebration will be in worship on May 17th.

Ponds Food Pantry: Spring Stock Up! Help fill the shelves with shelf stable milk, cereal (no cheerios), spaghetti sauce, peanut butter and jelly, size 5,6,7 diapers; mayo. Ketchup, mustard, canned chicken, salmon, tuna, pancake syrup, white rice, snacks, chicken/ beef ramen, paper towels, tissues, toilet paper. 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.



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

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

All those in the armed forces, especially those

connected to our congregation including Evan and Joseph

Erika, Kristen's sister

June, Lee's mother

Keith, Karen & Clyde, Valerie's brother and friends

Marilyn & Vincent, Lisa's parents

Melinda & Paul, Eleanore's sister & nephew

Miro, Vesna's father

Ron & June, Karen's parents

Alexa and Hank friends of Nancy

Gayle, friend of Joan & Eleanore

Janice, food pantry volunteer

Jennifer, friend of Sue & Eleanore

Joan, friend of Ron and Marilyn

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

Karol & Barbara, Eleanore's friends

Kim, friend of Sue

Mark and Keith, Susanne's friends

Michele H., friend of Weintraub's

Nancy, friend of Kim

Paula, friend of Nancy

Peggy & Christine, Alex's aunts

Peter, Terri's father; Julie, family friend of Nancy

Thomas, friend of Tony & Edie

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