

MESSIAH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 27, 2026

228 Ramapo Valley Rd, Oakland NJ 07436

www.messiahoklandnj.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 are invited to 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 pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,

we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hear this good news: We have peace with God through ✝ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

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: 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 oh so highly exalted,
Lord 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

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

¹ The word of the LORD came to me: ² What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? ³ As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴ Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins who shall die. ²⁵ Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶ When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed, they

shall die. ²⁷ Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸ Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ³⁰ Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹ Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

THE PSALM: Psalm 25:1-9 will be read responsively

¹ To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

² **My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

³ Let none who look to you be put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

⁴ **Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.**

⁵ Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my
salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

⁶ **Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.**

⁷ Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake
of your goodness, O LORD.

⁸ **You are gracious and upright, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

⁹ You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1-13

¹ If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves.

⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of

others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, ⁸ he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name that is above every other name, ¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. ¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW pg.172

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

Halle, halle, hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

GOSPEL: The Holy Gospel According to Matthew 21:23-32

Glory to you, O Lord

²³ When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴ Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’ ²⁶ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ²⁸ “What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom

of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN’S SERMON

BLESSING OF MITTEN, HAT, AND SCARF SETS

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Come As You Are

Glover/Crowder/Maher

¹Come out of sadness from wherever you've been.

Come broken hearted let rescue begin.

Come find your mercy O sinner Come kneel.

Earth has no sorrow that heaven can't heal.

Earth has no sorrow that heaven can't heal.

Lay down your burdens. Lay down your shame.

All who are broken, lift up your face.

Oh, wanderer come home, you're not too far.

So lay down you hurt. Lay down your heart. Come as you are.

²There's hope for the hopeless and all those who've strayed.

Come sit at the table. Come taste the grace.

There's rest for the weary. A rest that endures.

Earth has no sorrow that heaven can't cure.

Lay down your burdens. Lay down your shame.

All who are broken. Lift up your face.

Oh wanderer come home. You're not too far.

So lay down your hurt. Lay down your heart.

Come as you are. Come as you are.

Fall in his arms. Come as you are.

³There's joy for the morning. Sinner be still.

Earth has no sorrow that heaven can't heal.

Earth has no sorrow that heaven can't heal.

Lay down your burdens. Lay down your shame.

All who are broken lift up your face.

Oh wanderer come home, you're not too far. So lay down you hurt.

Lay down your heart. Come as you are. Come as you are.

Come as you are. Come as you are. Come as you are.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: THE 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

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 else do we thank God?..... 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, 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?..... 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**

Guide all who serve on the call committee with wisdom and faithful discernment, O God. Grant them patience and unity as they seek the pastor you are preparing for this congregation. Strengthen them in their work and bless this community at Messiah with trust as we await what you will provide. 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

Name above All Names

ELW #583

Jesus, Jesus, name above all names,
the only name by which we must be saved.

Jesus, Jesus, name above all names,
the only name by which we must be saved;
the only name by which we must be saved.

OFFERING PRAYER

God of creation, you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. **Amen.**

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Holy God, our Maker, our Healer, our Teacher, your magnificent creation springs forth from your Word. All that has life and breath praises your name. For your Word that sustains the earth, we thank you, O God. **We thank you, O God.**

You sent us Jesus, your Word, to renew the world. He healed the sick, fed the hungry, preached your mercy and called us to faith. For your Word in our Lord Christ, we praise you, O God.

We praise you, O God.

Nourish us with the Spirit of your Word, that we may grow in grace, bearing the fruits of redemption, and sharing your strength and beauty with all the world. For your Word in our lives, we entreat you, O God.

We entreat you, O God.

Accept our thanksgiving and receive our prayer, for the sake of your living Word, Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

My Lighthouse

Rend Collective

¹In my wrestling and in my doubts.
In my failures You won't walk out.
Your great love will lead me through.
You are the peace in my troubled sea.
You are the peace in my troubled sea.

²In the silence You won't let go.
In the questions Your truth will hold.
Your great love will lead me through.
You are the peace in my troubled sea.
You are the peace in my troubled sea.

Chorus: My lighthouse, My lighthouse.
Shining in the darkness I will follow You.
My lighthouse, My lighthouse.

I will trust the promise You will carry me safe to shore.
Safe to shore. Safe to shore. Safe to shore.

³I won't fear what tomorrow brings
with each morning I'll rise and sing.
My God's love will lead me through.
You are the peace in my troubled sea.
You are the peace in my troubled sea. *Chorus x1*

Bridge: Fire before us. You're the brightest.
You will lead us through the storms. x4
Chorus

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

UPCOMING WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

October 4, 2026 | 10:00am Worship

SEPTEMBER BENEVOLENCE OF THE MONTH

Putting Prayers to Action

OCTOBER BENEVOLENCE OF THE MONTH

Pony Power Therapies

THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

TUESDAY: 6:30 pm AA Meeting
THURSDAY: 12:00 pm Bible Study
7:30 pm Band practice
SATURDAY: Property Work Day
SUNDAY: 10:00 am Worship
1:00 pm Pet Blessing

TODAY'S MINISTERS

LAY LEADER: Michele Weintraub

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

LAY READER: Sue Boyce

USHER: Ron Rubner

GREETER: Megan Rotella

ALTAR GUILD: Jerri Angermueller
& Nancy Krause

FLOWER GUILD: Brigitte Albrecht

FLOWERS GIVEN BY: Boyce Family

VIDEO TECH: Alex Boyce

COUNTERS: Nancy Krause &
Brigitte Albrecht

COORDINATING COUNCILOR:
Nancy Krause

COFFEE HOUR: Nancy Krause &
Eleonore Wattenbach

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tricky Tray: Clean Water for Santa Rosa

Please join Ponds Reformed Church on Sept. 27 at 3pm in Ponds Fellowship Hall for a Tricky Tray to raise money for a village in Guatemala where one of their members lives. This village needs pipes & faucets to access clean water. Donations of baked goods or prizes would be greatly appreciated. Cost is \$5 to attend. Bring a friend! Please call or text Jen Crovatto for more details at 973-699-0568.

Bible Study: Join us on October 1st for Bible Study. We are returning to the book **A is for Alabaster**. If you need a copy, check the church library or let Joan or Eleanore know.

Blessing of The Animals: October 4th at 1:00pm outside.

Pastor Kimberly will lead us for a special blessing of the animals! All animals, real or stuffed, or a picture are welcome to come and receive a blessing! Monetary donations are accepted, as well as dog, cat, fish, gerbil, and any other kind of animal food to be donated to the local animal shelter, R.E.W.AR.! If you have any questions, please reach out to Kim.

Happy Birthday Mario!!: October 11th, after worship service

Video game fan or not, join us after church for a special coffee hour to celebrate Mario's birthday and Mario Kart racing on the large screen.

Book Club on Zoom at 7:00 pm:

October 12th: "The Only Woman in the Room" by Marie Benedict



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

Those in the armed forces,
especially those connected to our
congregation including Evan &
Joseph

Erika, Kristen's sister

June, Lee's mother

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

Marilyn & Vincent, Lisa's parents

Melinda & Paul, Eleanore's sister
& nephew

Miro, Vesna's father

Ron & June, Karen's parents

Gayle, friend of Joan & Eleanore

Janice, food pantry volunteer

Jennifer, friend of Sue & Eleanore

John, Joan, Todd, Peggy, Jim,

Kathy, Carol, Ellie, and Marianne
& family, Ron & Marilyn's friends

Kim, friend of Sue

Mark and Keith, Susanne's friends

Michele H., friend of Weintraub's

Nancy and Bobby, friend and

Uncle of Kim

Peggy & Christine, Alex's aunts

Peter, Terri's father

Thomas, Maria, Gary, & Julie,

friends of Tony & Edie

Alexa, Hank, Paula, Julie, Cynthia

& Samy, friends and coworkers of

Nancy

Andrew & Caroline, friends of Kim

& Michele

The family of Charles Oremland

Roland, son of Eleonore

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