



MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

*September 20, 2026
17th Sunday after Pentecost*

*Pastor Ben Cherland
Susan Leaverton, LMA Presiding*

Welcome to Messiah Lutheran Church

Please take a moment to fill out a square on the Messiah Connects form located on the clip board at the end of your row so that we may make a connection with you.

GATHERING

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father,
and of the ✝ Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG ELW 401 vs. 1-3 Gracious Spirit, Heed Our Pleading

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.**

GLORY TO GOD WHOSE GOODNESS SHINES

1 Glo - ry to God, whose good - ness shines on me,
2 World with - out end, . . . with - out end. A - men.

and to the Son, whose grace has par - doned me,
World with - out end, . . . with - out end. A - men.

and to the Spir - it, whose love has set me free.
World with - out end, . . . with - out end. A - men.

As it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and ev-er shall be. A - men.

Text: Paul M. Vasile, b. 1976, based on the Gloria Patri
Music: Paul M. Vasile
Text and music © Paul M. Vasile, admin. Augsburg Fortress

GLORY TO GOD
Irregular

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Please be seated.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

WORD

First Reading: Jonah 3:10—4:11

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?

¹⁰ When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

^{4:1} But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. ³ And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴ And the Lord said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵ Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶ The Lord God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." ¹⁰ Then the Lord said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?"

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 145:1-8

The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. (Ps. 145:8)

- ¹ I will exalt you, my God and king,
and bless your name forever and ever.
- ² **Every day will I bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.**
- ³ Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised!
There is no end to your greatness.
- ⁴ **One generation shall praise your works to another
and shall declare your power.**
- ⁵ I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty
and all your marvelous works.
- ⁶ **They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts,
and I will recount your greatness.**
- ⁷ They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.
- ⁸ **The Lord is gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

Second Reading: Philippians 1:21-30

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, ²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.

²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ and in no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹ For

he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Please Stand for the reading of the Gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Verses may be sung by a leader. Then the alleluia is repeated.

Music: Fintan O'Carroll and Christopher Walker

Music © 1985 Fintan O'Carroll and Christopher Walker, admin. OCP Publications, Inc.

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹ “The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ ⁷ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the

vineyard.’⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’⁹ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received a denarius.¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius.¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner,¹² saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’¹³ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius?’¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you.¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *ELW 469 By Your Hand You Feed Your People*

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

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need and all of God's creation.

*Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

Knowing that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

Please be seated.

MEAL

OFFERING

ELW 685 Take My Life, That I May Be

OFFERING PRAYER

Merciful God, as grains of wheat scattered upon the hills were gathered together to become one bread, so let your church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory through Jesus Christ, now and forever. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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 (*Pastor*)

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

San - to, san - to, san - to, oh Dios del u - ni - ver - so:
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God of might and mer - cy,

. . . lle-nos es-tán el cie - lo y la tie - rra de tu glo - ria.
your glo - ry fills all heav-en and earth. . . You are ho - ly, God.

Ben - di - to el que vie - ne en nom - bre del Se - ñor. . .
. . . Bless - ed be the Sav-ior, the one who comes in your name.

Ho - san - na en el cie - lo. San - to e-res, oh Dios.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. You are ho - ly, God.

Text: Traditional; English text, hymnal version
Music: Argentine traditional
English text © 2020 Augsburg Fortress

ARGENTINE SANTO
Irregular

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.

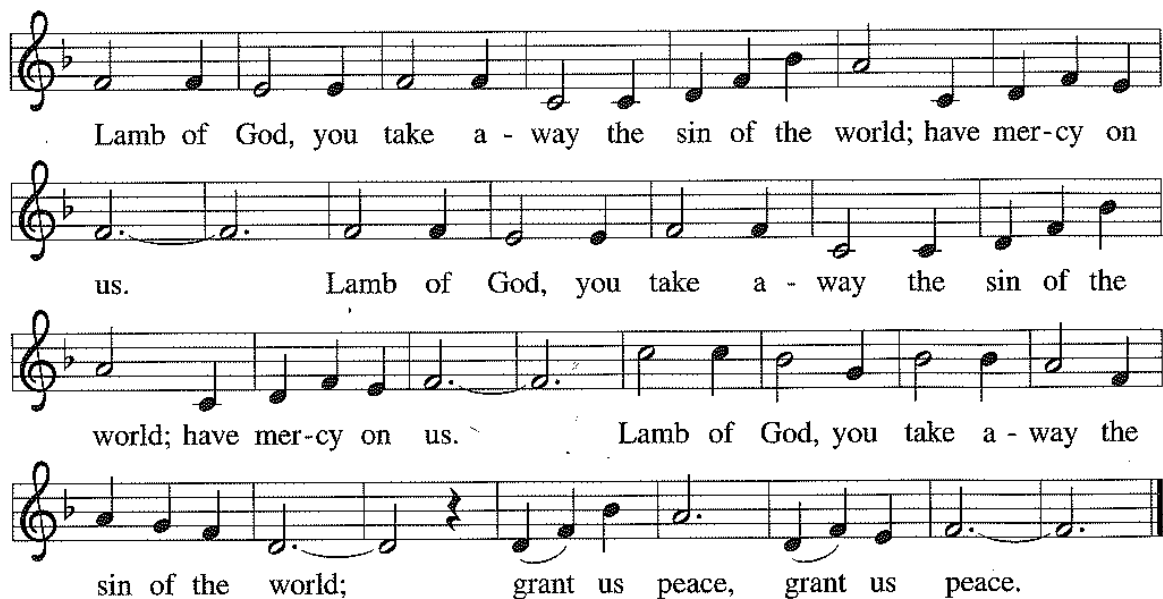
For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours,

now and forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

COMMUNION



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.

Music: *Bread of Life*, Jeremy Young, b. 1948
Music © 1995 Augsburg Fortress

ELW 487 What Feast of Love

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG *ELW 669 Rise Up, O Saints of God!*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

“Susan Leaverton, a Lay Ministry Associate, has been authorized by the Bishop of the Montana Synod to provide pastoral services in this congregation this Sunday.”
1221 24th St. S., Great Falls, MT 59405 . 406-453-1461 . www.montanasynd.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The Special Offering for September is
ELCA World Hunger**

Sunday services will continue to be held here at Messiah during Pastor Ben’s absence.

September 27th: Pastor Paul Schauer

October 4th: Pastor Kim Wilker

October 11th: Pastor Peter Christ of St. John’s United

October 19th: Bishop Ben Quanbeck

Please write your prayer requests in the prayer request book in the gathering area. We ask that you re-submit requests at the first of each month if they are still desired or contact the church office at 406-446-2430 or email requests to redlodgemessiah@gmail.com

with specific information and permission from the person you are adding.

The people of Messiah are praying for

Renee Boyer, Hannah Gonzales, Herb Hunt, Dolly Koski, Rick and Sandy Koski, Jim Kyner, Mary Lair, Bob Pollock, Carlos Ramalho, Sadie Sceva, David Smiley, Guynema Terry, and

The unspoken prayer requests of our congregation.

Messiah Lutheran Church
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redlodgemessiah@gmail.com, 406-446-2430
Administrative Assistant Hours
Monday – Thursday, 11:00 am – 3:00 pm

In an effort to make Messiah comfortable and welcoming for everyone, we ask that you refrain from using strong personal scents or perfumes. Thank you.

As a community of Christ's followers, we seek to grow, making a difference in the lives of others.

Live by faith . Share Christ's Love . Be a Voice for Hope