



Drawing by Jon Hlaster

The Lutheran Church of the Messiah

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Martin K. Erhardt, *Pastor*

Janice Hofreiter, *Organist*

Paul C. Hofreiter, *Choir Director*

John Mark Goerss, D. Min., *Pastor Emeritus*

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

February 16, 2025

Prayer upon entering: Lord God, mercifully receive the prayers of your people. Help us to see and understand the things we ought to do, and give us grace and power to do them; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Guests, welcome! We are delighted you are with us for worship this morning. Please introduce yourself to Pastor Erhardt, sign our guest book next to the main doors. Bibles are available on a shelf in the back of the nave. Kneelers and large-print bulletins are available from the ushers upon request. If you are seeking a church home, we invite you to join us here at Messiah.

Worship begins with the prelude and continues through the postlude. Once the prelude begins, please refrain from conversation. We use two hymnals: the green *Lutheran Book of Worship* (LBW) and the blue paperback *With One Voice* (wov). Hymn numbers below 600 are generally in LBW; above 600, in wov. The pastor's parts (spoken and sung) are designated "P:." Parts spoken or sung by the congregation are italicized, prefaced by "C:." The liturgy text and music are in the LBW on the pages noted in this service folder.

Holy Communion: Lutheran Christians celebrate a divine service of Word and sacrament in which God comes to us both in his proclaimed Word and in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We invite to commune at the Lord's table all baptized Christians who with contrite hearts trust God's word of forgiveness for their sins, acknowledge the presence of Jesus Christ both in the Communion elements and in this gathered body of believers, and seek, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to follow Jesus and walk in newness of life. If this doesn't describe you, we invite you to come to the altar rail to receive a blessing instead of the Communion elements. Indicate this by folding your arms across your chest at the rail. All are invited to bring their children forward for a blessing.

Individual cups are available in addition to the chalice (the common cup). Gluten-free wafers and grape juice are also available upon request from the server at the Communion rail. All are invited to bring their children forward for a blessing.

Families with young children: Welcome! We have children's activity backpacks in the back of the church for use during the service, as well as an unstaffed nursery on the stage downstairs. Feel free to ask an usher for help locating them. The stairs are at the back of the sanctuary.

Confession and Forgiveness

Please stand as you are able.

P: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: *Amen*

P: Father of mercies and God of all consolation, come to the aid of your people, turning us from sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may attend to your Word, confess our sins, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord and our Redeemer. C: *Amen*

P: Let us confess our sins to God.

Please kneel or sit for silent reflection and confession.

C: *Almighty God, merciful Father: I, a troubled and penitent sinner, confess to you all my sins and iniquities with which I have offended you and for which I justly deserve your punishment. But I am sorry for them, and repent of them, and pray for your boundless mercy. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being; forgive my sins, give me your Holy Spirit for the amendment of my sinful life, and bring me to life everlasting. Amen*

P: Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake forgives us all our sins. Through his Holy Spirit he cleanses us and gives us power to proclaim the mighty deeds of God who called us out of darkness into the splendor of his light. 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. C: *Amen*

Order of Holy Communion

Setting I (LBW p. 57)

Stand

Opening Hymn Now Thank We All Our God LBW 533

Apostolic Greeting *2 Corinthians 13:14*

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: *And also with you.*

Kyrie *p. 57*

P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C: *Lord, have mercy.*

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

C: *Lord, have mercy.*

P: 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.

C: *Lord, have mercy.*

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

C: *Lord, have mercy.*

P: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C: *Amen*

Hymn of Praise

pp. 58–59

P: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

C: *Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father: We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God: You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen*

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And also with you.*

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray.

C: *O God, you root those who trust in you by streams of healing water. Release us from the bonds of disease, free us from the power of evil, and turn us from falsehood and illusion, that we may find the blessing of new life in you through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen*

Please be seated for the scripture readings, printed on the back cover of this service folder.

First Lesson

Jeremiah 17:5-10

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

Psalm 1

p. 215

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

Choir Anthem

Trust in the Lord

John Carter

Words from Proverbs 3, adapted by Mary Kay Beall

Refrain:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart;

In all your ways acknowledge Him.

Trust in the Lord, trust in the Lord,

And He will direct your paths.

Fear the Lord, fear the Lord,

And turn your face from evil.

Fear the Lord, fear the Lord,

And He will heal your soul. *Refrain*

Honor the Lord, honor the Lord,

There is wisdom in all His ways.

Honor the Lord, honor the Lord,

Your reward is better than gold. *Refrain*

Trust in the Lord, trust in the Lord.

Verse (please stand)

Christ Is Arisen

LBW 136

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 6th chapter.

C (*sung*): *Glory to you, O Lord.*

Gospel Lesson

Luke 6:17-26

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C (sung): Praise to you, O Christ.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

If for This Life Only

Hymn of the Day

Amid the World's Bleak Wilderness

LBW 378

Creed (Apostles')

Spoken in unison

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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

The Prayers of the People

P: Living in the light of Christ, who reveals both our need and God's abundant love, let us pray for the church of Jesus Christ throughout the world and for those known to us in need of prayer.

After each prayer or petition,

P: Hear us, O God.

C: *Your mercy is great.*

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ, Immanuel.

C: *Amen*

The Sharing of the Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: *And also with you.*

Please take a moment to exchange a greeting of peace with your neighbors.

Gathering of Offerings

p. 66

As the offerings are brought forward, please stand and sing:

C: *Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.*

Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life. Gather the hopes and dreams of all; unite them with the prayers we offer now. Grace our table with your presence, and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

P: Let us pray.

p. 67

Merciful Father,

C: *we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us - our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

The Great Thanksgiving

p. 68

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And also with you.*

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: *We lift them to the Lord.*

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: *It is right to give him thanks and praise.*

P: It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord. Sharing our life, he lived among us to reveal your glory and love, that our darkness should give way to his own brilliant light. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Sanctus

p. 69

C: *Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might: Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.*

Eucharistic Prayer

P: We give you thanks, Father, through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, whom you sent in this end of the ages to save and redeem us and to proclaim to us your will. He is your Word, inseparable from you. Through him you created all things, and in him you take delight. He is your Word, sent from heaven to a virgin's womb. He there took on our nature and our lot and was shown forth as your Son, born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary. It is he, our Lord Jesus, who fulfilled all your will and won for you a holy people; he stretched out his hands in suffering in order to free from suffering those who trust you. It is he who, handed over to a death he freely accepted, in order to destroy death, to break the bonds of the evil one, to crush hell underfoot, to give light to the righteous, to establish his covenant, and to show forth the resurrection, taking bread and giving thanks to you, said: Take and eat; this is my body broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. In the same way he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This is my blood poured out for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, then, his death and resurrection, we lift this bread and cup before you, giving you thanks that you have made us worthy to stand before you and to serve you as your priestly people. And we ask you: Send your Spirit upon these gifts of your Church; gather into one all who share this bread and wine; fill us with your Holy Spirit to establish our faith in truth, that we may praise and glorify you through your Son Jesus Christ. Through him all glory and honor are yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church both now and forever. *C: Amen*

The Lord's Prayer

P: Taught by our Lord and trusting in His promises, we are bold to sing:

Our Fa - ther in heaven, hal - lowed be your name.

Your king - dom come. Your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins

as we for - give those who sin a - gainst us.

Chord symbols: F, C, Dm, C, F/A, Gm, C, F, C, Dm.

(continued on the next page)

C F/A Gm C F

Save us from the time of trial, and de - liv - er us from e - vil.

Dm C F/A Gm

For the king - dom, the power, and the glo - ry are yours,

C F

now and for - ev - er. A - men.

Agnus Dei: Lamb of God

p. 72

C: Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

Once the pastor says, “Welcome to the table of the Lord,” kneel or sit. Because Communion is important, please read and follow our Communion policy, printed on p. 2 of this service folder. Feel free to bring your hymnal and continue to sing. If you are not communing, you are invited to come forward to receive a blessing, but feel no pressure to do so. If you do come forward for a blessing (only), indicate this by folding your arms across your chest when you kneel at the altar rail. When the pastor dismisses your side of the rail, please return to your seat by the center aisle. If you would like Communion brought to your seat, please raise your hand to alert the pastor.

Communion Hymn Jesus Comes Today with Healing LSB 620

After all have returned to their places, the pastor says: (please stand)
P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you
 in his grace. C: *Amen*

Post-Communion Canticle (Nunc Dimittis, Luke 2:29–32) p. 73
C: *Lord, now you let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of ev’ry people: A light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen*

Post Communion Prayer

P: Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant to your Church your Holy Spirit and the wisdom which comes down from heaven, that your Word may not be bound but have free course and be preached to the joy and edifying of Christ's holy people, that in steadfast faith we may serve you and in the confession of your name may abide to the end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. C: *Amen*

Benediction

p. 74

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you ☩ peace. C: *Amen*

Postlude

Now Thank We All Our God

arr. Georg Friedrich Kaufmann

Announcements

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord. C: *Thanks be to God.*

Portions of our liturgy today are reprinted from the Lutheran Book of Worship, copyright 1978. The Prayer before Entering is adapted from *Revised Common Lectionary Prayers*, ©2002 Consultation on Common Texts.

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Thank you to today's Temple Servants

Acolyte	Don Meyer
Reader	Carolyn Gishlick
Ushers	Jeff Frole and Tom Fusco
Fellowship Host	Louise Cooper
Chancel	Pastor Erhardt
Offering Counter	Jeff Frole
Livestream	Jeff Frole

This coming week

Wed	7:30 PM	Choir
Sat	10:30 AM	Women's Fellowship and Bible Study
Sun	9:00 AM	Adult Forum
Sun	10:30 AM	Service of Word and Sacrament

Next Sunday

Gen. 45:3-11, 15 • Ps. 37:1-11, 39-40 • 1 Cor. 15:35-38, 42-50 • Luke 6:27-38
Opening Hymn: God Is Here (WOV 719)
Baptism Hymn: We Know That Christ Is Raised (LSB 603)
Hymn of the Day: I Bind unto Myself Today (LSB 604)
Communion Hymn: Let Us Break Bread Together (LBW 212)
Closing Hymn: On Our Way Rejoicing (LBW 260)

Please join us next Sunday, Feb. 23, for the baptism of Monica Luigs and the reception of new members of Messiah!

Soup & Salad Supper Hosts Needed

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (this year, March 5), and we plan to have a 6:00 PM soup & salad supper on each of these Lenten Wednesdays: March 12, 19, 26, and April 2 & 9 (no supper on Ash Wednesday or April 16). **If you are able to host a supper, please sign up on the sheet in the back of the nave.** Hosts bring enough soup, salad, and bread to feed 20 people. Feel free to team up with another person and host a supper together. Food costs can be reimbursed (submit receipts to Nancy Amidon). Paper goods, butter, and beverages will be provided. We could also use volunteers to help the hosts set tables before each supper and clean up afterward (mainly washing dishes). If you can help with set up or clean up, please contact Pastor Erhardt.

March/April Messenger: Please send news, photos, and announcements to Miranda Hempel at her email address in the church directory **by Sunday, February 23**, for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Adult Forum meets at 9am on Sundays in the parish building library. All are welcome. Current series: *Colossians*

2024 financial contribution statements have been mailed. If you have questions about yours, contact Financial Secretary Jeff Frole.

Mercer County now accepts plastic #5 (PP: polypropylene) containers, in addition to #1 and #2, in curbside recycling buckets. See the flyer on the bulletin board by the Cedar Lane door.

Pastor Erhardt leads a monthly community book discussion:

March 13: *Reading Genesis*, by Marilynne Robinson

April 10: *Dissolution*, by C. J. Sansom

Discussions begin at 7:30 PM via Zoom. Please obtain and read the book before each discussion, and email Pastor Erhardt for a Zoom invitation.

Available on the back pew:

- (1) **New: Soup & Salad host sign-up sheet**
- (2) Feb. 2025 edition of the *Messiah Messenger*
- (3) February-May 2025 Temple Servant schedule

Prayer Corner

We remember in our prayers:

- Grant & Julianna Schultheis (expected a baby this month), Micha Livne (friend of the Gishlicks who is ill), Julia Majsztrik (with thanksgiving for healing from heart surgery and praying for continued good health), Carole Bleicher (friend of Carolyn Gishlick), Ted Alslev (son of Elda Alslev, to overcome his addiction to smoking), Mary Pickens (friend of Jon and Pat Hlafter, undergoing an experimental medical treatment), Sue Parisi (friend of Pat Hlafter, being treated for breast cancer), Peter Schulze (son of Lydia and Carl Schulze, friends of Miranda Hempel, Brad Bergmann, and Jenny Mills – for comfort, strength, and healing)
- The Henkes family (mourning the death of Hans's father, Maarten Henkes), the family of the Rev. Clifford Swartz (mourning the death of his mother-in-law), John and Marina Bleimaier (friends of Messiah, mourning the death of Marina's daughter Cayte)

Prayer requests are generally printed in the Prayer Corner and included in the Sunday intercessory prayers for 4 weeks. If you would like us to keep someone there longer, we are happy to do that. Please call the church office or email lcmprinceton@gmail.com to let Pastor Erhardt know.

First Lesson: Jeremiah 17:5-10

Thus says the LORD: Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals and make mere flesh their strength, whose hearts turn away from the LORD. They shall be like a shrub in the desert and shall not see when relief comes. They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. Blessed are those who trust in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit. The heart is devious above all else; it is perverse—who can understand it? I the LORD test the mind and search the heart, to give to all according to their ways, according to the fruit of their doings.

Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised, and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

Gospel Lesson: Luke 6:17-26

He came down with them and stood on a level place with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases, and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And everyone in the crowd was trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them. Then he looked up at his disciples and said: “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. “Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. “Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. “Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven, for that is how their ancestors treated the prophets. “But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. “Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. “Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep. “Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.