



I have come
looking
for fruit

LUKE 13:7

Third Sunday in Lent
March 23, 2025

Messiah Lutheran Church

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Connect with Messiah – text 'MESSIAHFP' to 84576 to sign-up

Messiah Lutheran School

4401 W. 215th St., Fairview Park, OH 44126, (440) 331-6553

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Welcome to worship! We are delighted you chose to worship here today. May you be strengthened through God's word and the promise of life in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The mission statement of Messiah Church is: *Drawing in to Christ, Building up in Christ, Sending out for Christ.*

Our aim is to love each other as Christ has first loved us all.

Concerning the sacrament of Holy Communion

- “In this sacrament the crucified and risen Christ is present, giving his true body and blood as food and drink. This real presence is a mystery.”¹
- “Admission to the Sacrament is by invitation of the Lord, presented through the church to those who are baptized.”² We welcome to the Lord's table all who commune in other Christian faiths.³
- Gluten-free hosts are available for those who need them; ask the pastor as you approach.
- Those not communing, are encouraged to come forward for a blessing, for all are loved by God.
- If you are unable to come forward, please let an usher know you would like to receive communion at your seat.

¹ The Use of the Means of Grace (ELCA), Part III, Principal 33

² Ibid, Part III, Principal 37

³ Ibid, Part III, Principal 49

Third Sunday in Lent

*You are invited to participate at the places marked with **bold** type.*

Prelude: "Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service" David Cherwien

----- Gathering -----

Please stand as you are able.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's
abiding love.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate One,
**you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love,
but our lives do not always reflect you
and your love for the world.**

**We do not show others the tender compassion
you have shown to us.**

**We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality
you grant to all people.**

**We oppress others,
even though you have set us free again and again.**

We squander the abundant gifts of the earth.

**Transform our lives
and guide us again in the way of the cross.**

Amen.

Beloved in Christ,
God's arms are always stretched open wide
to welcome the wandering ones home.

In ☩ Christ your sins are forgiven.

You have a place in God's house forever.

Amen.

Hymn #445 "Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters"

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.**

Kyrie (page 156, front of red hymn book)

Let us pray. Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Please be seated.

----- Word -----

COME TO THE FEAST

Based on Isaiah 55

Marty Haugen



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¹ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵ Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness. ⁶ Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷ Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.” ⁸ We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹ We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. ¹⁰ And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹ These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹² So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³ No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able

Glo - ry and praise to you, O Lord Je - sus Christ.

Choir/Cantor: Jesus began ¹ to proclaim,
Repent, for the kingdom of heaven ¹ has come near.

Gospel Luke 13:1-9

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 13th chapter.
Glorify to you, O Lord.

¹ At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.² [Jesus] asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?”³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did.⁴ Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

⁶ Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none.⁷ So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ ⁸ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it.⁹ If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

Sermon

Silence for reflection.

Please stand as you are able.

Hymn #331 “As the Deer Runs to the River”

Let us confess our faith in the words of 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.**

Public Reception of New Disciples

Today we are grateful for our siblings in Christ who are joining us in our mission to make a difference in people's lives, to spread the good news of Christ, and be in fellowship with one another.

The following people, who desire to join us as disciples of Christ at this congregation, are invited to come forward as their names are called: Carl Bush, Eric DePhillips & daughter Charlotte, Kelly Donahue & grand daughter Sophia, Evelyn Klass, Yvonne Reed, Amy Zubin.

As disciples of Christ we commit to; recognize and admit that it is our "privilege and duty to make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacrament; live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran Church; and support the work of this congregation, our synod, and the churchwide organization of the ELCA through contributions of our time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards of what God entrusts to our care.

The minister addresses the new disciples.

Siblings in Christ, you have made a public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:

to live among God's faithful people,
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ Jesus through
word and deed,
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

New disciples: **I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.**

The minister addresses the congregation.

People of God, do you promise to support and pray for one another, and particularly these new disciples, in your life in Christ?

Congregation: **We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.**

Please stand as you are able.

Let us pray, we thank you, Lord, for these new disciples of your church called Messiah. By your life-giving power, bind us to each other in you, strengthen us for service, support us all our days, and bring us at length to that day when all your children will be one in you. Hear our prayer for the sake of your church. **Amen.**

Let us rejoice with these siblings in Christ.

Congregation: We rejoice with you in the life of baptism. We give thanks and praise to God for you and promise to walk along with you as we proclaim the Good News to all the world.

The assembly may offer acclamation with applause.

Prayers of Intercession

Each portion of the prayers ends with:

A: Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

The prayers conclude with:

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The assembly may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace

You may be seated.

Offering is received

*Electronic offerings may be made via:
text to 855-913-1744, or scan*



(8:30) Choir: "Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord" Latin Hymn

(11:00) Joy Ringers: "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded" Jason W. Krug

Please stand as you are able.

Hymn #186 "Create in Me a Clean Heart"

A: Let us pray. Gracious Provider,

you set your immense treasures among us, opening your heart to the world. As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love, deepen our commitment to sharing those treasures with others, through our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

----- Holy Communion -----

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.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times . . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

“Holy, Holy, Holy” (page 162, front of red hymn book)

In the night in which he was betrayed...Do this for the remembrance of me.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:
“The Lord’s Prayer” (page 163, front of red hymn book)

All who are hungry, come!
The feast of grace is spread.
Thanks be to God! Amen!

Please be seated.

“Lamb of God” (page 163, front of red hymn book)

Distribution Hymns:

Hymn #486 “God Extends an Invitation”

Hymn #623 “Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me”

Please stand as you are able.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

A: Let us pray. Generous Host,
you have shared your feast with us and made us new.
Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities,
that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom,
in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

-----**Sending**-----

God our tender parent, God the crucified one,
God the reconciling Spirit, ✠ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

Hymn #658 "O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts"

A: Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.
We will, with God's help.

Postlude: "Trumpet Tune in C"

Henry Purcell

Serving Today

Preaching Minister: Rev. William Weidenbach, Jr

Presiding Minister: Rev. Seth Bridger

Assisting Minister: Carl Herhuth (8:30) Janice Snyder (11:00)

Communion Assistant: James Quayle (8:30) Helen Casselberry(11:00)

Deacons: Robert Trapp (8:30) Needed (11:00)

Acolyte: Needed (8:30) Isabella Russ (11:00)

Choir Director & Coordinator of Music Ministry: Deborah Zudell-Dickey

Principal Organist: Michael Cherup

Altar Guild: Maria Geier, Diane Paton

Children's Church: Kristen Jolicoeur, Claire Connelly

Prayers of the Congregation

- For people the world over who are living in the midst of war and its tumult. That all may strive for peace and reconciliation. That all may ask; What will you have me do, Lord?
- For those lifted up by worshippers last week at all of our on-line and in-person services: Pope Francis, Halle and baby, Doug, Sandy, those traveling, Gayle, Tom, Bruce, Kendall, Nancy, Lori, Joyce, Jill, Richard, Bob and Delores, Mike and Marilyn, Myra, Chris, Brian, Jim, Paul, Jill, Dawn, Ray, Bonnie, John, Ellen, Nicole, Piper, Merrie, John, Monika, Dave, Sandi, Chuck, Jane, Jim, Karen, Don, Gary, Harry, Jacob, Marguerite, David, Chris and Linda, Sean, Dennie, Casey, Danny, Ron, Kate, Mason, Matt, Julia, Simon, Mason, Heather, Alex, Evelyn, George, Marion, Mike's boys, Sandy, Victor, Mike, Sheri, Jan, Rita, US Federal Workers and all families of the Messiah Family, the Geiling and Petak families as they grieve, Schaefer family, Dory family, Eckert family, and Orzech family.
- For all government leaders to practice grace and compassion in their actions. And for us to have the courage to only speak words of love and mercy. For all those suffering physically, emotionally or financially from decisions made by others.
- Those for whom we quietly pray; those who struggle emotionally and financially, those with family discord, those whose jobs are at risk or unfulfilling, those who are afraid or worried, those with health concerns, and those we have not yet reached with the love of Christ.

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