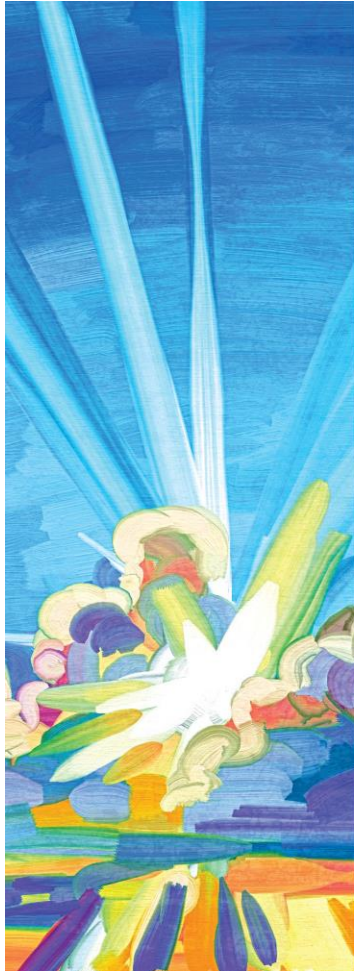


Our Vision: To forever change lives through the Gospel of Jesus by becoming an equipping, empowering, and mobilizing church in our community that displays the love of Christ and connects with people of all walks of life through worship, communion, service, fellowship, and compassion, led by the Holy Spirit and focused on the Great Commission (Mt 28.18-20).



As long
as I am
in the
WORLD,
I am the
LIGHT
of the
WORLD.

John 9:5

The Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 19, 2023 – 9:00 AM

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church

Our Mission: To help people grow a faith in Jesus Christ that works in real life.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Shepherd Songs

Nancy M. Raabe

See *ELW* #502, 778, and 782 for the texts of these hymns.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who journeys with us these forty days,
and sustains us with the gift of grace.

C Amen.

P Let us acknowledge before God and one another
our need for repentance and God's mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Holy God,
we confess to you our faults and failings.
Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word;
we take for ourselves instead of giving to others;
we spoil rather than steward your creation;
we cause hurt though you call us to heal;
we choose fear over compassion.
Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,
as we seek to follow in your way of life.

C Amen.

P Hear the good news:
God so loved the world that God gave the only Son,
so that all may receive life.
This promise is for you!
God embraces you with divine mercy,
† forgives you in Christ's name,
and revives you in the Spirit's power.

C Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness

ELW #843

Praise the One who breaks the darkness
with a liberating light;
praise the One who frees the pris'ners,
turning blindness into sight.
Praise the One who preached the gospel,
healing ev'ry dread disease,
calming storms and feeding thousands
with the very bread of peace.

Praise the One who blessed the children
with a strong yet gentle word;
praise the One who drove out demons
with a piercing, two-edged sword.
Praise the One who brings cool water
to the desert's burning sand;
from this well comes living water
quenching thirst in ev'ry land.

Praise the one true love incarnate:
Christ, who suffered in our place;
Jesus died and rose for many
that we may know God by grace.
Let us sing for joy and gladness,
seeing what our God has done.
Praise the one redeeming glory;
praise the One who makes us one.

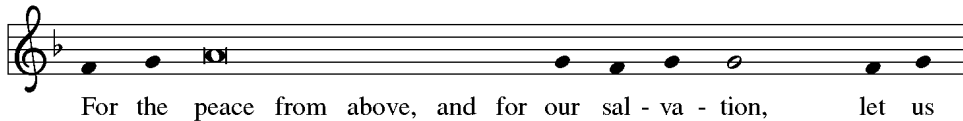
GREETING

- 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



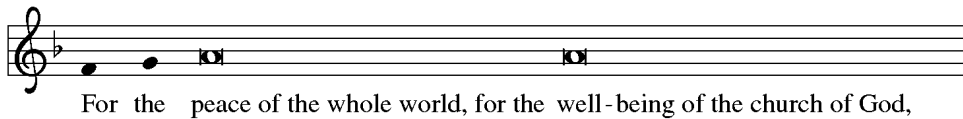
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer-cy.**



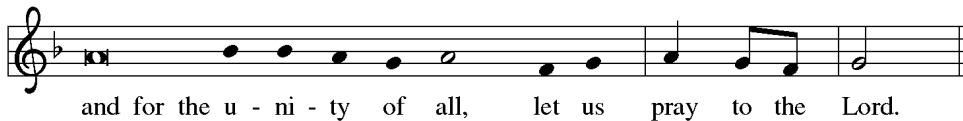
For the peace from above, and for our sal - va - tion, let us



pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



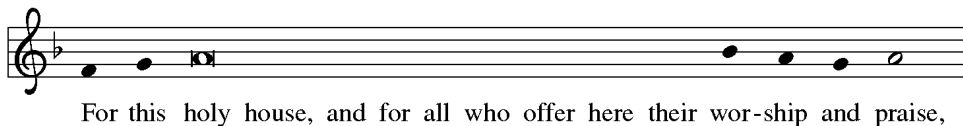
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** Let us pray. Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

WORD

CHORAL MEDITATION

Shepherd of My Heart
Sanctuary Choir

John Purifoy

The Lord is my shepherd, I have everything I need;
He lets me rest in green pastures, he leads me to quiet streams.
My strength he refreshes, bringing honor to his name.
Though I walk through the valley, with him I am not afraid.

Shepherd of my heart, I can hear you calling me.
You are there, beside me in the dark.
Holding out your hand, you guide me safely home again.
Close companion, dearest friend, shepherd of my heart.

The light of your glory goes before me on the way.
You honor me with your goodness, your love will keep me safe.
My cup brims with blessings from the kindness that you give.
I'm secure in your presence as long as I live!

Shepherd of my heart, I can hear you calling me.
You are there, beside me in the dark.
Holding out your hand, you guide me safely home again.
Close companion, dearest friend, shepherd of my heart.

KIDS' TALK

FIRST READING

EPHESIANS 5:8-14

L Let us listen for the word of the Lord.

⁸Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; ¹³but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake!

Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

L The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

LENTEN ACCLAMATION

Congregation:

Re - turn to God with all your heart, the
Source of grace and mer - cy; Come, seek the ten - der
faith - ful - ness of God.

Repeat optional

GOSPEL

JOHN 9:1-41

P The gospel according to John, the ninth chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long

as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes,⁷saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?”⁹Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.”¹⁰But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?”¹¹He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.”¹²They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.”¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided.¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight¹⁹and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?”²⁰His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind;²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.”²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.²³Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.”²⁵He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”²⁶They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”²⁷He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?”²⁸Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.”³⁰The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes.³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will.³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind.³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”³⁴They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”³⁶He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.”³⁷Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.”³⁸He said,

“Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. ³⁹Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” ⁴¹Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

P The gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

GREETING

P Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord, Jesus Christ.

C **Amen.**

MESSAGE

“Who Is He?”

Kathleen Ormiston

HYMN OF THE DAY

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

Hymn #779

Amazing grace! —how sweet the sound—
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
was blind, but now I see.

‘Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come;
‘tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me;
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.

When we’ve been there ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun,
we’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
than when we’d first begun.

APOSTLES' CREED

A With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

C 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

A Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

A Eternal God, you seal us by the Holy Spirit and mark us with the cross of Christ forever in baptism. Bless August Matthew Schroeder as we welcome him into God's family through baptism. Inspire us by your love as we strive together for justice and peace in all the earth. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A Creating God, by your word you have made all things, and you hate nothing you have made. Teach us to perceive the beauty of the breadth of your creation, from the grandest mountain range to the smallest springtime bud. Linger near all places that are recovering from natural disasters, including Turkey, Syria, and the western United States, and grant those communities hope as they rebuild with hope in your bountiful creation. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A Powerful God, you anoint kings and establish rulers. Guide the work of heads of state and elected officials including President Biden, President Zelensky, and President Putin. Encourage them to lead with justice and to remove barriers that impede the well-being of all. Bring peace to countries stricken with war and conflict and protect the people from the destructive consequences of war. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A Shepherd God, you lead us beside still waters and restore our souls. Keep watch over those who weep; comfort those who grieve and tend all who are sick including Kathy Johnsonbaugh, Karen Bickhart, Kathy Ruprecht, Heather Behnke, Matthew Eastman, Sharon Frane, Myrna Henn, Jena Rejak, Alfred Tangeman, and Helen Jinks. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A God our host, you fill us at your table with more than we could ever ask. Feed us with your hunger for justice to care for people ignored, oppressed, or blamed for their poverty because of the sins of others. Equip the feeding ministries of this congregation and community including Faith and Light Food Pantry, Maplewood Mennonite Food Pantry, The Pantry at Purdue University Fort Wayne, Associated Churches, and Community Harvest Food Bank. Nourish us so we can nourish our neighbors. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A God of history, with thanksgiving we remember our ancestors in faith who cared for your people. We praise you for the ways they formed the faith of others and continue to inspire us. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

P We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C Amen.

MEAL

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

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 our thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P We give you thanks, O God, for your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who, in the night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray. . .

C Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION

P Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

DISTRIBUTION

Sheep May Safely Graze
Messiah Ringers

Bach/Rogers

BLESSING

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

C Amen.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A Let us pray. Embodied God, at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus. With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise, empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors and touch the world with your love.

C Amen.

SENDING

SENDING HYMN

Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death

Hymn #452

Awake, O sleeper, rise from death,
and Christ shall give you light;
so learn his love, its length and breadth,
its fullness, depth, and height.

To us on earth he came to bring
from sin and fear release,
to give the Spirit's unity,
the very bond of peace.

There is one body and one hope,
one Spirit and one call,
one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,
one God who made us all.

Then walk in love as Christ has loved,
who died that he might save,
with kind and gentle hearts forgive
as God in Christ forgave.

For us Christ lived, for us he died,
and conquered in the strife.
Awake, arise, go forth in faith,
and Christ shall give you life.

BENEDICTION

P . . . in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Serve in love.

C **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Assisting in the service today:

Pastor Timothy Graham

Minister Kathleen Ormiston

Assisting Minister Jan Johnson

Pianist Stan Engle

Technical Director Josh Gumbert

AV Technicians Emily Blackman, Richard Hambrock

Lector Erica Dold

Communion Assistants John & Norma Wehrle

Ushers Rex & Ginny Smith

Greeter Pat Strasser