



Welcome to Messiah

We are a community of grace where we live out Jesus' commandment to love God with our whole heart and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We also seek to be a welcoming community for all people. This includes people of every race, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity, ethnic background, economic grouping, religious affiliation, and political persuasion. We do this simply because God created all people in God's own image and Christ Jesus came so all people might have abundant life. We may not always be perfect, but this is our intention--all are welcome!

Second Sunday of Christmas

10:30 am - January 4, 2026

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church

PRELUDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING HYMN

#915 "When a Star Is Shining"



1 When a star is shin-ing o - ver east - ern hills,
2 Where the world is wait-ing for an un - known day,
3 Lead us on, O Day-star, in the qui - et night;



when the air is si - lent, and the clam-or stills,
where a voice for - got - ten cries, "Pre - pare the way!"
guide us through the shad-ow with your gen - tle light;



when the night is wait-ing, and the old hopes rise,
Where an earth - ly pow-er makes the heart turn cold,
show us in a man-ger our re - demp-tion's sign;



then the time has rip - ened and the heart grows wise.
there the gifts are of - fered— in - cense, myrrh, and gold.
bring us to a morn-ing where the prom - ise shines.



Lead us on, lead us on, to a morn-ing where the



CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty Savior,
Prince of Peace.

Amen.

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness,
let us confess our sin.

Reconciling God,
**we yearn for your presence to transform
our grief, pain, and despair.**
**We confess that we have not always prepared
room in our hearts for your love;
we have not always recognized
your presence among us;
we have not always embraced your message of peace.**
**We cry out, weary with the burden of violence,
oppression, and fear.**
**We confess our failure to make room
for those seeking refuge;
our participation in violent systems
that harm your innocent ones;
our reluctance to embody your good news.**
**Be born in us today
and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation.**

Amen.

God's grace upon grace flows over you.
✠ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.
Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!
Amen.

The presid-
ing minister
will read the
sections in
plain text.
You are
invited to
read the
bold por-
tions.

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.**

KYRIE

The musical score for the Kyrie is written for a single melodic line. It consists of four staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics 'Ky - ri - e, e - le - i - son.' are written below the first staff. The second staff continues the melody, with the lyrics 'Lord, have mer - - cy.' and 'Chri - ste, e - le - i - son.' written below. The third staff continues the melody, with the lyrics 'Christ, have mer - - cy.' and 'Ky - ri - e, e - le - i - son.' written below. The fourth staff concludes the melody, with the lyrics 'Lord, have mer - - cy.' and 'Lord, have mer - - cy.' written below. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 2/4 in the second staff and remains there for the rest of the piece.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Please
be seat-
ed

⁷Thus says the LORD:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
“Save, O LORD, your people,
the remnant of Israel.”

⁸See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame,
those with child and those in labor together;
a great company, they shall return here.

⁹With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations I will lead them back;
I will let them walk by brooks of water,

in a straight path where they shall not stumble,
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him
and will keep him as a shepherd does a flock."

¹¹ For the LORD has ransomed Jacob
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

¹² They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

¹³ Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy;
I will comfort them and give them gladness for sorrow.

¹⁴ I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,
says the LORD.

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Ephesians 1:3-14

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you had heard

the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Please
stand as
you are
comfortable
in body
or in spirit.

Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu, al - le -
lu - ia. lu, al - le - lu - ia. *(Cantor intones appropriate verse with melody shown)*

GOSPEL

John 1:10-18

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

The Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ!

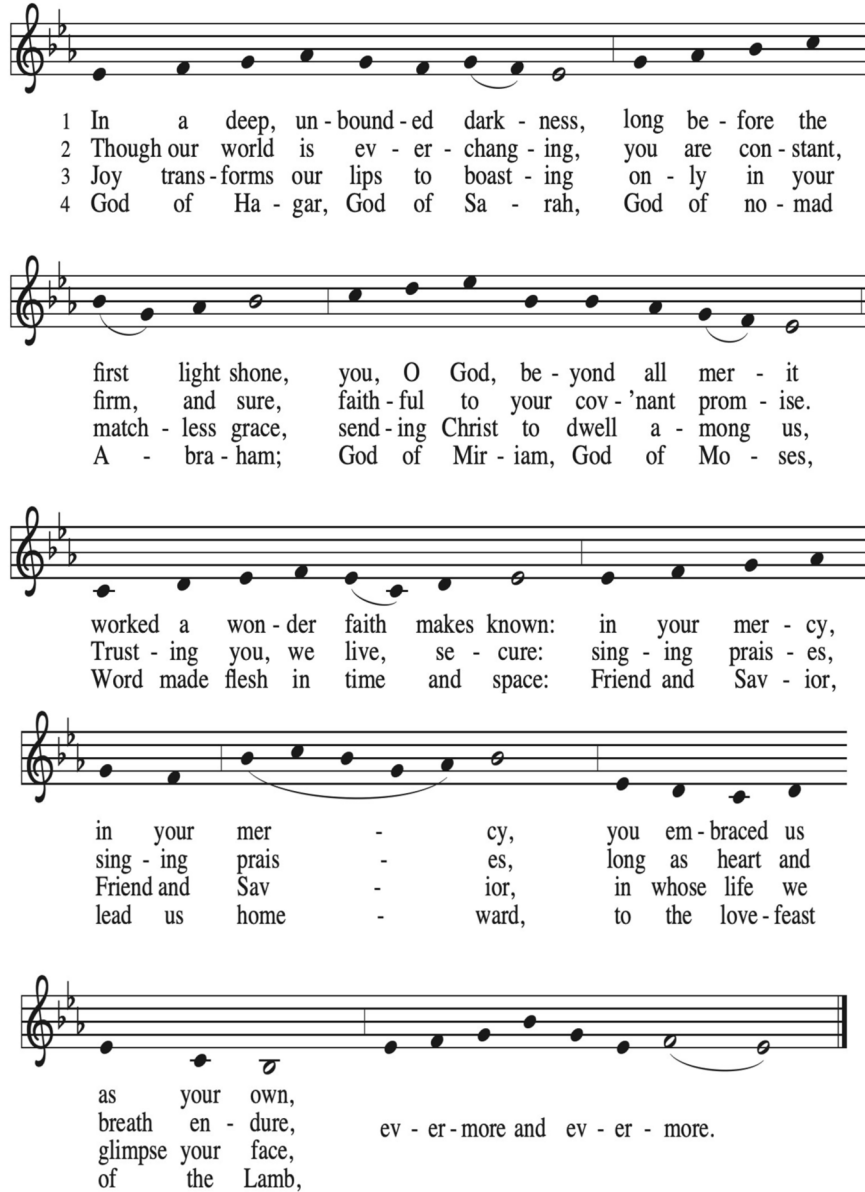
Please be
seated

SERMON

"A Christmas Story" By Barbara Brown Taylor

HYMN OF THE DAY

#1093 "In a Deep, Unbounded Darkness"



1 In a deep, un-bound-ed dark-ness, long be-fore the
 2 Though our world is ev-er-chang-ing, you are con-stant,
 3 Joy trans-forms our lips to boast-ing on-ly in your
 4 God of Ha-gar, God of Sa-rah, God of no-mad

first light shone, you, O God, be-yond all mer-it
 firm, and sure, faith-ful to your cov-'nant prom-ise.
 match-less grace, send-ing Christ to dwell a-mong us,
 A-bra-ham; God of Mir-iam, God of Mo-ses,

worked a won-der faith makes known: in your mer-cy,
 Trust-ing you, we live, se-cure: sing-ing prais-es,
 Word made flesh in time and space: Friend and Sav-ior,

in your mer-cy, you em-braced us
 sing-ing prais-es, long as heart and
 Friend and Sav-ior, in whose life we
 lead us home-ward, to the love-feast

as your own, ev-er-more and ev-er-more.
 breath en-dure,
 glimpse your face,
 of the Lamb,

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *(Brian E. Konkol from Sojourners)*

Please
stand as
you are
com-
fortable
in body
or spir-

**We believe in God, our Creator,
 maker of a universal community still in process;
 God, who created precious resources to provide for all;
 God, who created us to be connected as companions with God,
 the Earth, and all people.**

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's Son, our Savior,⁶ who was ridiculed, tortured and executed for the sins of humankind.

He rose from the dead,
overthrew the dominance of evil and injustice for our sake,
and he continues to judge and liberate the hatred,
ignorance, and arrogance of all human beings.

We believe the way of Jesus is our way;
our way of light,
and our way of life.

We believe in the Spirit of God, our Advocate,
whose blaze comforts with divine presence
and challenges human hearts to burn for righteousness.

We see the power of God in our lives and throughout the world.

We trust that God's work, through our actions, can bring peace. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need.

O God, you reveal yourself wherever two or three are gathered in your name. Be with us now, not only in the infant Jesus and resurrected Christ, but in the beloved people of this assembly. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You reveal yourself in the waters of the womb; in brooks, ponds, and oceans; and in the waters of baptism. Grant us wisdom to tenderly care for the earth as a garden watered by your grace. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You reveal yourself in blessed diversity. Help us to look for you in people near and far, in bodies of all kinds, and in kindred young and old. Let us seek you in many places, praising you in many tongues. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You reveal yourself in new life. Support those beginning a new job, a new relationship, or a new living situation, especially those displaced because of tragedy or loss. Be with all others who need your life-giving touch this day, especially... Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You reveal yourself in holy communion. Sustain all who provide food and fellowship in this congregation and in the wider community. Make our tables signs of your welcoming presence among us. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Emmanuel, God with us

**We want to sing like Mary sang,
until all who are looking for you have found their way to the gift of Christ.
Help us live like the shepherds
—who weren’t afraid to go and tell the good news.
Help us take the words of the angels to heart
—to not be afraid.
Help us to be as trusting as Joseph
—who chose to believe the impossible.**

But more than anything, give us the courage and conviction to share this story
with a hurting world so desperate for hope.

...and the darkness shall not overcome it. Amen.

THE 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 deliv-
er us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and
forever. Amen.**

COMMUNION HYMNS

“Lamb of God”

Please be
seated.

Lamb of God, You take a - way the sins of the world, mi - se - re - re
no - - bis. Lamb of God, You take a - way the
sins of the world, mi - se - re - re no - - bis.
Lamb of God, You take a - way the sins of the world, do - na no - bis pa -
cem, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem.

Please stand
as you are
comfortable in
body or spirit.

#638 “Holy Child within the Manger”

#294 “In the Bleak Midwinter”

BENEDICTION

The Light of the Star, the light of God's love, shines before you as you leave this place. Go in peace, go in joy, go in love to meet God's people in the world and greet them with the good news of salvation. Amen

SENDING HYMN

"The Joy" by *The Belonging Co.*

6
1. This is the day You made.
16
So, I'll re-joice and be glad, re-joice and be glad in it.
26
This is where I be-lieve that You are more than e-nough, more
36
than e-nough for me. You are faith-ful to Your prom-ise, You are strong
46
when I am weak. When I'm stand-ing in Your pres-ence, I have ev-
56
'ry-thing I need. The joy of the Lord, the joy of the Lord is my strength.
66
The joy of the Lord, the joy of the Lord is my strength. O
76
my soul, bless His Name, all that is with-in me say the
86
joy of the Lord, the joy of the Lord is my strength.
96
2. Je-sus, come what may. You are wor-
106
thy of all, wor- thy of all my praise.
116
joy of the Lord is my strength.

Let it rise up like a riv - er, o - ver - flow
ing, Ho - ly Spir - it. Let it pour out
with no lim - it, o - ver - flow - ing, Ho - ly Spir -
it. Let it rise up like a riv - er,
o - ver - flow - ing, Ho - ly Spir - it. Let it pour
out with no lim - it, o - ver - flow - ing,
Ho - ly Spir - it.
joy of the Lord is my strength.

SENDING

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to God's people on earth!

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Welcome to Messiah Lutheran Church



Children belong in worship!

Worship kits and a nursery space is available. God rejoices in the joyful noise of children and so do we!



God calls us to welcome everyone!

Messiah seeks to be a welcoming community and to share the love of God with our neighbors. If you are new, please introduce yourself to our pastors.



Worship should be accessible!

Hearing devices (and T-Coil) and large print bulletins are available. We invite you to sit or stand as you are comfortable. All gender and family restroom facilities are available on the first level, please see signs in the Narthex.



All are welcome at Jesus' table!

During communion grape juice and gluten-free options are available. Those not wishing to commune may come forward for a blessing. Those not able to come forward may receive communion in their pew, please notify the usher.



God calls us to pray!

Private prayer requests may be made by writing them on the back of the Welcome Card. If you would like to be added to the prayer list or receive a pastoral care visit, please contact the church office.

Preacher:	Pr. Molly Hunter
Assisting Minister:	Jeanne Groos
Reader:	Josh MacIvor-Andersen
Ushers:	Amy Diedrich, Jill Luoma
Communion Assistants:	Sandy Lindberg,
Greeters:	Ellen Symons,
Songleader:	Sara Parks
Pianist:	Jacob Schmeltzer
Band Members:	Tom Bronken, Darren Smith, Ross Larson
Audio Technician:	Dan Zini
Livestream Technician:	Traci Zini
Projection Technician:	Kathy Godec
Nursery:	
Flower Delivery:	

Acknowledgements:

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If you wish to designate your donation to a specific fund, please be sure to do so. Any undesignated donations automatically go to our general fund which supports the entirety of our ministry.

Thank you for your generosity!

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