



MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

5th Sunday in Lent

March 15, 2026

THE GATHERING

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP



We welcome you to The Gathering this morning

Our Staff

Cindy Anderson, Parish Administrator Email: secretary@messiah-erie.org

Bonnie Stearns, Director of Utilities

Michelle Flaherty, The Gathering Music Minister: mlcmusic@messiah-erie.org

Pastor Tom Glasoe, Email: pastor@messiah-erie.org Cell: 814-460-8529

2025 Eastern Ave, Erie, PA 16510 814-899-6386 messiah-erie.org

Our Mission:

*Glorifying God through our worship, our witness, our service,
and our support*

Our Vision:

To build and strengthen the body of Christ

Holy Communion

To help you feel more comfortable please know that all baptized Christians who believe in the real presence of Christ in the sacrament and have already received Holy Communion in your home church, are welcome to come to the altar and receive Holy Communion.

To receive the sacrament:

1. Communicant should receive the consecrated host from the Pastor and then proceed to the Assisting Minister who will be standing near the sanctuary pillar on whichever side of the church is being communed to receive a prefilled communion cup;
2. If the communicant prefers the consecrated grape juice, they shall receive that from the Pastor.
3. If you are unable to come forward, please let an usher know and the pastor will bring Holy Communion to you.

Assisting at Worship:

	Today	March 22
Asst. Min.	Brian Rogala, Jr.	Bella Alaniz
Lector	Jean Parker	Bella Alaniz
Acolyte	Kayla Bresee	Manny Alaniz
Usher	Brian Rogala	
Sound System	JJ Conner	Rich Alaniz
Video	JJ Conner	Rich Alaniz
Counters	Tim Smock, Karen Pistner	Art Anderson, Mary Rush
Altar Guild	Robin Curtis, Jean Parker, Karen Pistner	

1. The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning,
it's time to sing your song again.
Whatever may pass, and whatever lies before me,
let me be singing when the evening comes. *(R)*
2. You're rich in love and you're slow to anger.
Your name is great and your heart is kind.
For all your goodness, I will keep on singing;
ten thousand reasons for my heart to find. *(R)*
3. And on that day, when my strength is failing,
the end draws near and my time has come;
still, my soul will sing your praise unending
ten thousand years, and then forevermore! *(R then Ending)*

Ending: Worship your holy name,
Lord, I'll worship your holy name.
Sing like never before, O my soul;
I'll worship your holy name, Lord, worship your holy name.
Lord, I'll worship your holy name.

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Lesson

1 Samuel 16:1-13

The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." Samuel did what the LORD commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably. I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely his anointed is now before the LORD." But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do

not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him, for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.” Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any of these.” Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him, for we will not sit down until he comes here.” He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. The LORD said, “Rise and anoint him, for this is the one.” Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

A The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gospel Lesson

Luke 15:1-3,11-32

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.” So he told them this parable:

“There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the wealth that will belong to me.’ So he divided his assets between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant region, and there he squandered his wealth in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that region, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that region, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to his senses he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against

heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.” So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe - the best one - and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate, for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate. “Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has got him back safe and sound.’ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command, yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’

A The Gospel of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

Song

I Can Only Imagine

1. I can only imagine what it will be like
when I walk by your side.
I can only imagine what my eyes will see
when your face is before me. I can only imagine.

Refrain 1: Surrounded by your glory what will my heart feel.
Will I dance for you Jesus or in awe of you be still.

Will I stand in your presence or to my knees will I fall.
Will I sing hallelujah will I be able to speak at all.
I can only imagine. I can only imagine.

2. I can only imagine when that day comes
and I find myself standing in the Son.
I can only imagine when all I will do
is forever, forever worship you.
I can only imagine. I can only imagine. (R1, R2)

Refrain 2: Surrounded by your glory what will my heart feel.
Will I dance for you Jesus or in awe of you be still.
Will I stand in your presence or to my knees will I fall.
Will I sing hallelujah will I be able to speak at all.
I can only imagine yeah I can only imagine.
I can only imagine yeah I can only imagine.
I can only imagine yeah I can only imagine. (E)

Ending: I can only imagine when all I will do
is forever, forever worship you. I can only imagine.
I can only imagine when all I will do
is forever, forever worship you. I can only imagine.

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Prayers of the People

Peace

P The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

P Let us offer to one another a sign of Christ's peace.

Song of Offering

Thy Word

Stand

Refrain: Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

1. When I feel afraid, think I've lost my way,
still you're there right beside me,
and nothing will I fear as long as you are near.
Please be near me to the end. (R)

Words Psalm 119:105, refrain; Michael W. Smith, stanzas. Music Amy Grant © 1984 Meadowgreen Music.
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Prayer of Dedication of Gifts and Self

A Let us pray. *(brief pause)* O God, maker of heaven and earth,
C your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Thanksgiving for the Great Meal

P Lift up your hearts and give thanks to the Lord our God.
C We gladly lift up our hearts and give God our praise and thanksgiving.

Consecration

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Distribution Song

God of Wonders

1. Lord of all creation, of water, earth, and sky;
The heavens are your tabernacle. Glory to the Lord on high!

Refrain1: God of wonders beyond our galaxy, you are holy, holy.
The universe declares your majesty, you are holy, holy.
Lord of heaven and earth, Lord of heaven and earth.

2. Early in the morning, I will celebrate the light.
When I stumble in the darkness I will call Your name by night. *(R)*

Bridge: Hosanna, (to the Lord of heaven and earth).
Hosanna (to the Lord of heaven and earth).
Hosanna (to the Lord of heaven and earth). You are holy.

Refrain2: God of wonders beyond our galaxy, you are holy, holy.
Precious Lord, reveal your heart to me.
Father, hold me, hold me.
The universe declares your majesty,
you are holy, holy, holy, holy.

Ending: Your grace is enough; heaven reaches out to us.
Your grace is enough for me.
God I sing: your grace is enough; I'm covered in your love.
Your grace is enough for me, for me.

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Dismissal

A Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C Thanks be to God.

Announcements

Second Mile Giving is that stewardship we offer in addition to our regular giving. For **March, Youth Ministry** is our Second Mile Giving beneficiary. Contributions may be made throughout the month by using the yellow envelopes found in the pews. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

Wesleyville Food Pantry: Please consider a financial gift. Checks should be made payable to Messiah Lutheran Church marking "Food Pantry" in the memo line.

It's All Greek to Me Bible Study: Pastor Tom is leading a weekly Bible study on **Tuesdays at 1:00 pm & Wednesdays** follow Vespers in Fellowship Hall.

Lenten Soup Supper & Vespers: **Wednesday, March 18, & 25, at 5:30 pm for supper, 6:00 pm Vespers** in Fellowship Hall. Sign up in the Narthex to bring a soup, dessert or see Cindy for more options!

Purim Celebration: **Saturday, March 21, 5:00 pm** for a celebration of Purim. It is a time of food, fellowship and fun. It will be a time of story telling, sharing jokes, have food and do a singalong and be regaled with each other's humor. Join us!!!!

Easter Flowers: order forms are on the counter in the Narthex. Help us beautify our church for Easter by sponsoring a spring, potted flower. for **\$8.00 per plant**. All orders are due by **Sunday, March 22!**

Holy Week Services: ***Meal in the Upper Room: Monday, March 30 at 6:00 pm***. Signup in the Narthex.

Maundy Thursday: April 2, 7:00 pm

Good Friday: April 3, 7:00 pm

Easter Sunday: April 5

8:30 am Traditional, **11:00 am** the Gathering Contemporary.

**MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH
PRELIMINARY 3-YEAR VISION
APPROVED - 2025 to 2027**

WORSHIP

Start?

Technology

Add Screens in sanctuary	(DONE)
Update website	(ongoing)
Obtain Hearing Assisted Devices	(DONE)

Music Ministry

Build out the Band	(2025)
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CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY

Bubble Church	(ongoing)
School Day Off Camp	(Fall 2025)
Milestone Ministry	(Fall 2025)

PROPERTY

Fix Front Electronic Sign	(DONE)
Repair/Purchase Boiler	(DONE)
Plumbing Upgrades/Restrooms	(2027)
Buy New Freezer	(DONE)

IN-REACH

Recruit and Train More Volunteer	(2025)
Train in-home communion ministry	(2025)

EDUCATION

Bible Study (Adult and Children) - have more options	(2025-2027)
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OUTREACH

Maintain Community Garden	(ongoing)
Continue Back to School Bash	(2025-2027)
Continue participation in Community National Night Out	(2025-2027)

FELLOWSHIP

Explore more group events	(ongoing)
Continue to grow OWLs ministry (spiritually and fellowship)	(ongoing)
Lutheran Walkers	(2025)

Wesleyville Food Pantry Volunteers Needed

March 16 at 10:00am to unload food delivery.

March 17 at 10:00-11:00am & 5:00-6:00pm for regular food distribution.

This Week at the Church

(See Newsletter for More Detail)

**Office Hours :Monday Closed, Tuesday 10:00am-5:00pm,
Wednesday Closed, Thursday 10:00am-5:00pm,
Friday 10:00am-5:00pm**

Sun. 3/15	<i>4th Sunday of Lent</i>	
	8:30 and 11:00AM	Service of Holy Communion
	9:45AM	Servant Outreach
Mon.	6:30PM	Guided Meditation
Tues.	10:00AM	Sewing Circle
	1:00PM	Bible Study
Wed.	5:30PM	Soup Supper
	6:00PM	Vespers
	6:30PM	Bible Study
Thu.	10:00AM	Grateful Prayer Group-CC
	6:00PM	Church Council
	7:30PM	NA Group
Fri.	7:30PM	AA
Sat.	5:30PM	Purim Party
Sun. 3/22	<i>5th Sunday of Lent</i>	
	8:30 and 11:00AM	Service of Holy Communion