

February 1 2026

4th Sunday after Epiphany

Messiah Lutheran

Amherst, NH



Mass of Steady Light

liturgical musical setting by Jon Abrams

Dedicated with gratitude to those who
gather, sing, and trust the work of worship.

PRELUDE

Jon Abrams

WORDS OF WELCOME

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
the fountain of living water,
the rock who gave us birth,
our light and our salvation.

Amen.

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,
we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water is poured into the font

We give you thanks, O God,
for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters
and by your Word you created the world,
calling forth life in which you took delight.
Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.
Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.
At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.
By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons,
making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,
and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.
Shower us with your Spirit,
and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.
To you be given honor and praise
through Jesus Christ our Lord
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

Dakota Road

All Are Welcome

Hans Peterson

Larry Olson

All are wel - come, friend and stran - ger at the ban - quet of the Sav - ior.

All are wel - come. All are wel - come here.

From the wo - man who who comes - cry - ing,
From the ones to the who feel for - got - ten,
Go in - to the streets and cit - ies,

leav - ing those who to the sense farms at their and Je - sus' feet, place is gone, to the man who
to the man ones who to the man ones who

knows the right way but can - not see.
live in hun - ger, here you be - long.
splen - did ta - ble, God's mer - cy.

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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.

Voice

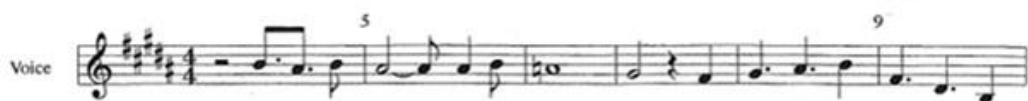
Ky - ri - e - lei - son - ky - ri - e - lei - son -

le - i - son - Chri - ste - lei - son - Chri -

ste - e - lei - son - ky - ri - e - lei - son -

e - lei - son -

John Alden



Glory to God— in the high — est and peace to His peo - ple, the



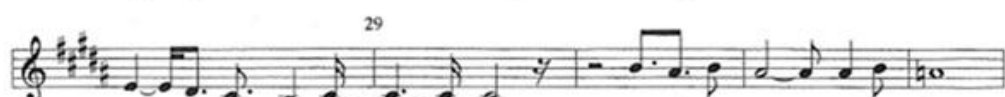
peo - ple on earth— Glory to God in the high—est and



peace to His peo-ple on earth — Lord, God heaven-ly King al-



migh - ty God and Father we worship You — we give You thanks— we



praise You for Your glo — ry Glory to God— in the high—



—est and peace to His peo - ple on earth— Lord Je—sus Chirst on—ly



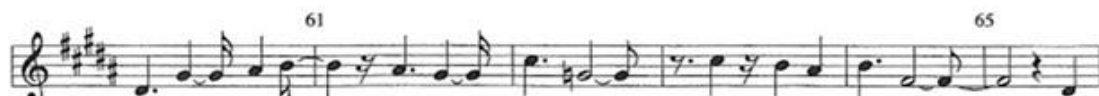
Son of the Fa—ther Lord God— Lamb of God — You take a - way



— the sin of the world — have mercy — on us — Glory to



God — in the high — est and peace to His people on earth —



seated are you — at the right hand of God the Father — re-



69

- ceive our prayer For you a-lone are the ho-ly one You a-lone are the Lord

73

You a-lone are most high Jesus Christ — with the spi-rit most ho — ly the

77

81

Glo - ry of God. Glory to God in the high — est and peace to His

85

peo - ple His peo - ple His peo - ple peace to His peo — ple His peo —

89

93

— ple on earth A — men

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

A reading from the 6th chapter of Micah:

¹ Hear what the Lord says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

² Hear, you mountains, the case of the Lord,
and you enduring foundations of the earth,
for the Lord has a case against his people,
and he will contend with Israel.

³ “O my people, what have I done to you?
In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

⁴ For I brought you up from the land of Egypt
and redeemed you from the house of slavery,
and I sent before you Moses,
Aaron, and Miriam.

⁵ O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised,
what Balaam son of Beor answered him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the saving acts of the Lord.”

⁶ “With what shall I come before the Lord
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

⁷ Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

⁸ He has told you, O mortal, what is good,
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice and to love kindness
and to walk humbly with your God?

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God**

PSALMODY 15 (sung responsively)

MLC Psalm Tone I

MLC Psalm tones by J. Abrams 2024



¹ Lord, who may dwell in your | tabernacle?
Who may abide upon your | holy hill?

² **Those who lead a blameless life and do | what is right,
who speak the truth | from their heart;**

³ they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil | to their friends;
they do not cast discredit up- | on a neighbor.

⁴ **In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who | fear the Lord.
They have sworn upon their health and do not take | back their word.**

⁵ They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes a- | gainst the innocent.
Those who do these things shall never be | overthrown.

SECOND READING

A reading from the 1st chapter of 1 Corinthians:

¹⁸ The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation, to save those who believe. ²² For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³ but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength. ²⁶ Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are, ²⁹ so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God**



GOSPEL READING

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 5th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹ When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵ “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷ “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸ “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰ “Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON



1 Build a long - er ta - ble, not a high - er wall,
 2 Build a saf - er ref - uge, not a larg - er jail;
 3 Build a broad - er door - way, not a long - er fence.
 4 When we lived as ex - iles, ref - u - gees a - broad,



feed - ing those who hun - ger, mak - ing room for all.
 where the weak find shel - ter, mer - cy will not fail.
 Love pro - tects all peo - ple, spar - ing no ex - pense.
 Christ be - came our door - way to the reign of God.



Feast - ing to - geth - er, strang - er turns to friend,
 For an - y place where jus - tice is de - nied,
 When we em - brace com - pas - sion more than fear,
 So must our ta - bles wel - come those who roam.



Christ breaks walls to piec - es; false di - vi - sions end.
 Christ will breach the jail wall, free - ing all in - side.
 Christ tears down our fenc - es; all are wel - come here.
 None can be ex - clud - ed; all must find a home.

Text: David Bjorlin, b. 1984

Music: NOËL NOUVELET, French carol

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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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

A brief silence.

God our wisdom, renew the church in the power of the Spirit, that it may do justice, love kindness, live humbly, and boldly proclaim Christ crucified. We pray for social justice and humanitarian aid ministries (*faith-based organizations may be named*).

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God our source, we honor you by caring wisely for your creation. We pray for the health of old growth forests, ice caps, and ocean currents. Preserve the diversity of life on earth.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God our righteousness, raise up visionary leaders who serve with integrity and respect human rights. Increase freedom in every nation. Protect educators, journalists, artists, and religious activists who are reviled for speaking truth.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God our advocate, you give hope to all who suffer because of persecution, poverty, or war. Reunite separated families and bring orphaned children to safety. Comfort any who grieve or suffer in any way (*especially*) Claudette Briere, Ed Costa, Norm and Polly Cote, Deloris Jay, Carol Clark, Elia Herlinda Soteldo Cuica, Kayann Laughlin, Timothy Alexander, The Wurst Family, Rev Bob Kocher, Shelly Stama, Eric Ball, Connor McCaffrey, Marc Bouchard, Jeffery Lindenberg, Jim Bellig, Diane Hazel, Linnea Micciulla, Phil Stinnett, Susan Poutre, Krista Seckinger, Carly King, Christine Covell, the Demello family, John and Wilma Minnick, Karma, Barbara Scholz.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You invite all people to your table of grace. Make this a community of radical hospitality where all feel loved and celebrated. Show us how to better welcome visitors and bless the ministries of hospitality in this place such as ELCA World Hunger and our local food pantries including Share, bless the efforts of AMMPARO, the ELCA congregations of the New Hampshire conference, Habitat for Humanity, Lutheran Disaster Response, Sleep in Heavenly Peace, Family Promise of Southern New Hampshire, Border Servant Corps, His mansion. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God our blessing, we pray for the children and youth of this congregation, and for parents, grandparents, mentors, teachers, and youth ministers who model love for their neighbor and care for others. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God who sustains us in our lives and tends as we are dying, we pray for churches and communities that are struggling to keep their doors open. We pray for those people and communities we know that are on death's door and for those churches going through holy closure such as Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran in Salem, Oregon. Thank you for rich years of abundant ministry. Thank you for the blessed rest you give the dead. Whether we live or whether we die we are the Lord's. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God our joy, we give thanks for the lives of those before us who journeyed humbly with you. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**



SENDING PRAYER FOR HONDURAS TRIP Prayers for Pastor David & Doreen Rinas, Jeff Cordts, Bishop Nathan Pipho and the team.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful *Offering Song*



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of
all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble
with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980

Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927

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OFFERTORY PRAYER

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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 and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;

in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;

and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

The musical score is written for a voice part in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. A signature is visible in the top right corner of the first staff.

1 5

Voice

Ho - ly ho-ly ho-ly Lord God of pow'r and might hea-ven and earth are

9

full of your glo-ry Ho-san-na Ho-san-na Ho-san-na in the high-est Blessed is he who

13 17

comes in the of the Lord Ho-san-na Ho-san-na Ho-san-na in the highest Ho-san-na
name

21

Ho - san - na Ho - san - na in the high - est

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,

the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus 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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

✠ **Christ has died.**

✠ **Christ is risen.**

✠ **Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming. **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.
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.

COMMUNION

Joel Myers



Lamb of — God — You take a-way the sin of the world have mercy on us —



Lamb of — God — you take a-way the sin of the world have mercy on us —



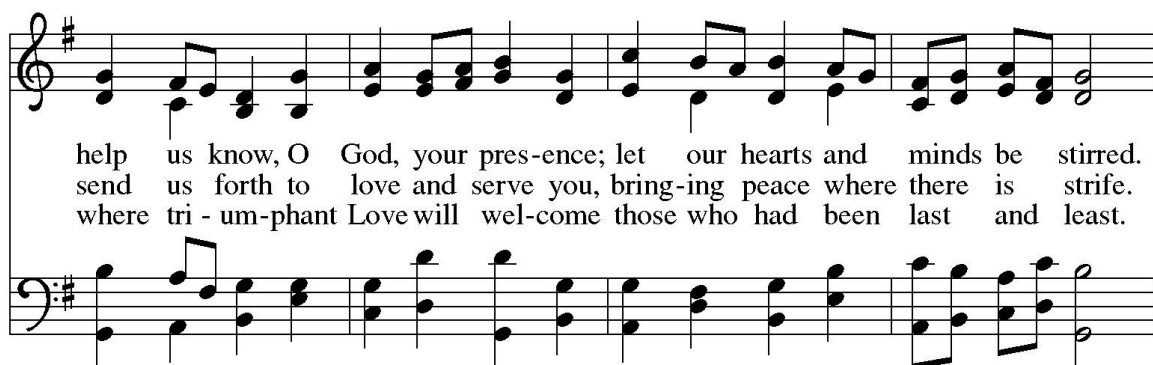
Lamb of — God — you take a-way the sin of the world Grant us — peace



COMMUNION HYMN ELW 522 As We Gather at Your Table



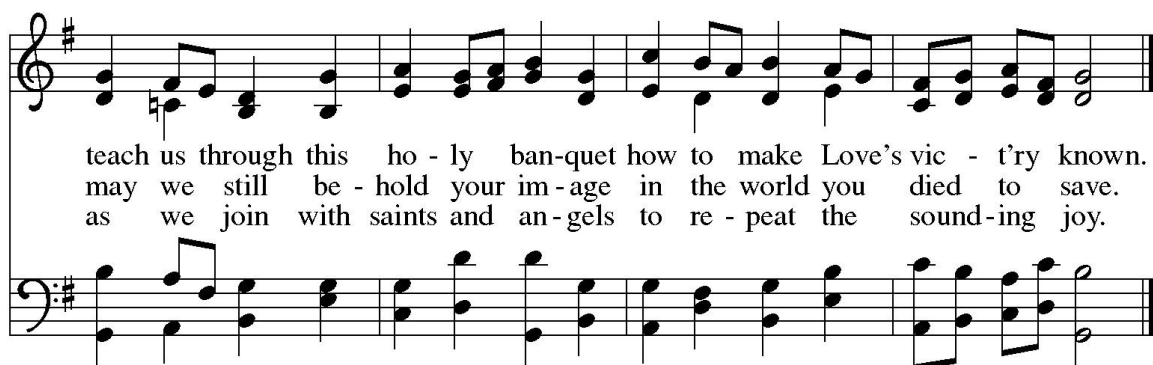
1 As we gath-er at your ta - ble, as we lis - ten to your word,
 2 Turn our wor-ship in - to wit-ness in the sac - ra - ment of life;
 3 Gra - cious Spir - it, help us sum-mon oth-er guests to share that feast



help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
 send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.
 where tri - um-phiant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.



Nour-ish us with sa - cred sto - ry till we claim it as our own;
 Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for - give as you for - gave;
 There no more will en - vy blind us nor will pride our peace de - stroy,



teach us through this ho - ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic - t'ry known.
 may we still be - hold your im-age in the world you died to save.
 as we join with saints and an-gels to re - peat the sound-ing joy.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: IN BABILONE, *Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlities en Contradansen*, 1710; arr. Julius Röntgen, 1855–1932

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POST COMMUNION PRAYER

God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

- The God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus. **Amen.**
- The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
- The God of all grace ☩ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN ELW 669 Rise Up, O Saints of God!

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. It is in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. The score consists of two systems of music. The first system contains five verses of lyrics. The second system contains the concluding lines of the hymn. The piano accompaniment is written in the bass clef, and the vocal parts are written in the treble clef. The lyrics are as follows:

1 Rise up, O saints of God! From vain am - bi - tions turn;
2 Speak out, O saints of God! De - spair en - gulf's earth's frame;
3 Rise up, O saints of God! The king - dom's task em - brace;
4 Give heed, O saints of God! Cre - a - tion cries in pain;
5 Com - mit your hearts to seek the paths which Christ has trod;

Christ rose tri - um - phant that your hearts with no - bler zeal might burn.
as heirs of God's bap - tis - mal grace, the word of hope pro - claim.
re - dress sin's cru - el con - se - quence; give jus - tice larg - er place.
stretch forth your hand of heal - ing now, with love the weak sus - tain.
and, quick - ened by the Spir - it's pow'r, rise up, O saints of God!

Text: Norman O. Forness, b. 1936

Music: FESTAL SONG, William H. Walter, 1825–1893

Text © Norman O. Forness, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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SENDING

Go and let your light so shine before others... **That God might be glorified. Amen.**

POSTLUDE Jon Abrams



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WORSHIP ASSISTANTS	February 1 st 4 th Sunday after Epiphany	February 8 th 5 th Sunday after Epiphany	February 15 th Transfiguration of Our Lord
Preacher & Presider	K. Hester	E. Costa	K. Hester
Liturgist	T. Costa	B. Mitchell	Doreen Rinas
Musician	J. Abrams	J. Abrams	J. Abrams
Reader	L. Schur	J. Reitter	David Rinas
Greeters/Ushers	Drakes	Schurs	Costas
Altar	T. Drake	R. Meldrum	M. Ball
Bread	T. Costa	D. Cordts	Schurs
Tech	R. Neukam	R. Meldrum	D. Schur
Snacks	R. Meldrum & Doreen Rinas	K. Hester & MMC	C. Wisneski
Lead Counter	L. Rossé	B. Mitchell	Meldrum

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Karl will be on retreat with our Episcopalian brothers and sisters tonight through midday Wednesday at St. Methodios in Contoocook. If you need urgent pastoral care during this time, please contact Pastor Kim Hester by voice or text at 571-330-6408. You can also e-mail her at pastor@ctknashua.org.

Family Promise meal is tomorrow. Please have any food you are dropping at the church here by 3:45. Trudi Costa is bringing the food to Family Promise. If you have questions or an issue, please reach out to her.



Beer and Hymns at Union Coffee, Wednesday 6:00-8:00

We will be collecting food for SHARE the items for **February**: Canned Fruit, Flour, Sugar, Coffee & Tea, Juice, Instant Rice, Cold Cereal, Instant Oatmeal Packets, Individually Wrapped Snacks. There will be a basket in the narthex.

It is now even easier to make one time or recurring gifts online to our general fund and/or our monthly special appeal. You can go to our web page (www.messiahnh.org) and then click on "online giving" in the navigation menu to be taken to our Vanco giving page. If you have questions please reach out to our financial secretary, Jonathan Rossé, at messiahfinancialsecnh@gmail.com.

This is a request for an altar volunteer: once every 4-5 weeks... involves setting up for communion and cleaning up after, placing pitcher of water on baptismal font. May set up on Saturday. Flexible if unable to make it on your assigned day. If we could get 6 people, it would be every 6 weeks. Thank you for considering this. Please let Pastor Karl or Joanne or Marge know.

Ash Wednesday is on February 18 this year. We will have our service of imposition of ashes, prayer, and communion at 7:00 PM. Please plan to join us. If you cannot make it in the evening and would like to receive imposition of ashes and communion as part of a pastoral visit during the day please contact Pastor Karl to make arrangements.

SPECIAL OFFERING: January – March **"End 68 Hours of Hunger!"**

A new program is starting in Amherst & Mont Vernon to eliminate hunger for children on the weekends. We at Messiah are collecting money that will be used for perishables, e.g. bread, tortillas, allergy-specific foods and other ways to fill gaps that might emerge.

If you would like to help, please write checks to Messiah with "Special Offering" in the memo line. We hope to send the first check by mid-February. Thank you! *Marge and Doreen*