

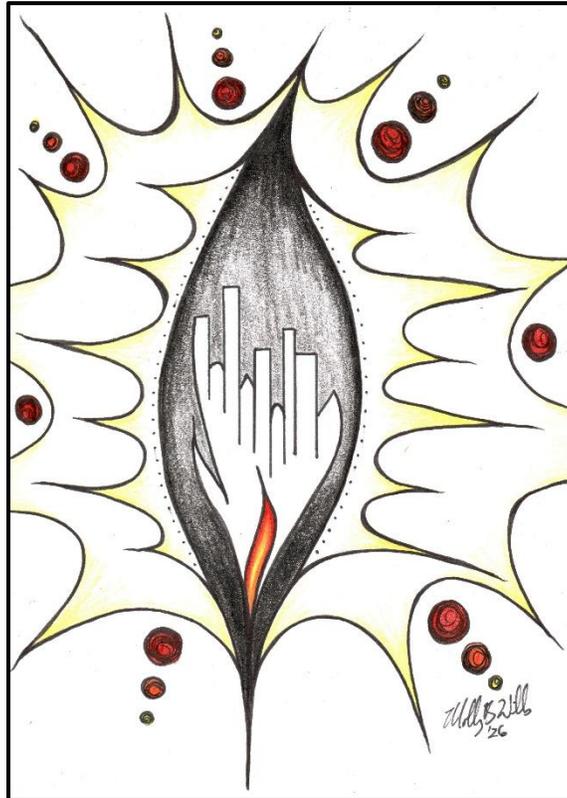
*Bethel Lutheran Church*

Rev. Molly Wills, Pastor | Jan Smith, Accompanist  
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany | Sunday, February 8, 2026  
ACS Holy Communion Setting 12

*Spirit Art*

*A meditative study of scripture through art.*

*Matthew 5:13-20*



*Welcome! We're glad you're here!*

**If you are new to Bethel, here is some helpful information about worship services.** We use the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (red hymnal) and the supplement *All Creation Sings* (purple hymnal), which contain liturgy and hymns. Liturgy pages are at the front of each hymnal, with the page numbers at the bottom and in the bulletin as (red ELW p.) or (purple ACS p.) Hymn pages are in the back two-thirds of the hymnal, with the page numbers at the top and in the bulletin as (red hymnal #) or (purple hymnal #). The songs from the *Green Book* are in the bulletin as (green binder #). **Hearing assistive devices are available; speak to an usher for assistance.**

*Gathering*

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

MEDITATION TIME

“Dwell in the Light” arr. by Lloyd Larson

“This Little Light of Mine” arr. by Mark Albrecht

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP SONG “Change, My Heart, O God” (red hymnal #801)

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters. **Amen.**

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely. Mighty God, lover of justice, **you call us to life in community, but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors. We have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ and forgives your sin in + Jesus’ name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG “Rise, Shine, You People!” (red hymnal #665)

GREETING (purple ACS p. 30)

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 (purple ACS p. 31) **Kyrie eleison...**

SONG OF PRAISE (purple ACS p. 31) **Glory to you...**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

**Lord God, with endless mercy, you receive the prayers of all who call upon you. By your Spirit show us the things we ought to do, and give us the grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

CHOIR ANTHEM “Get On Board Little Children” arr. by Andre J. Thomas

### *Word*

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

FIRST READING: Isaiah 58:1-9a [9b-12]

<sup>1</sup> Shout out; do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. <sup>2</sup> Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments; they want God on their side. <sup>3</sup> “Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?” Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day and oppress all your workers. <sup>4</sup> You fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. <sup>5</sup> Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD? <sup>6</sup> Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? <sup>7</sup> Is it not to

share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them and not to hide yourself from your own kin? <sup>8</sup> Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. <sup>9a</sup> Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, "Here I am." [<sup>9b</sup> If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, <sup>10</sup> if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. <sup>11</sup> The LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your needs in parched places and make your bones strong, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water whose waters never fail. <sup>12</sup> Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.] The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 112:1-9 [10] (responsive reading)

<sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! Happy are they who fear the LORD and have great delight in God's commandments!

<sup>2</sup> **Their descendants will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.**

<sup>3</sup> Wealth and riches will be in their house, and their righteousness will last forever.

<sup>4</sup> **Light shines in the darkness for the upright; the righteous are merciful and full of compassion.**

<sup>5</sup> It is good for them to be generous in lending and to manage their affairs with justice.

<sup>6</sup> **For they will never be shaken; the righteous will be kept in everlasting remembrance.**

<sup>7</sup> They will not be afraid of any evil rumors; their heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.

<sup>8</sup> **Their heart is established and will not shrink, until they see their desire upon their enemies.**

<sup>9</sup> They have given freely to the poor, and their righteousness stands fast forever; they will hold up their head with honor.

[<sup>10</sup> **The wicked will see it and be angry; they will gnash their teeth and pine away; the desires of the wicked will perish.**]

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 [13-16]

<sup>1</sup> When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the testimony of God to you with superior speech or wisdom. <sup>2</sup> For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. <sup>3</sup> And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. <sup>4</sup> My speech and my proclamation were made not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup> so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God. <sup>6</sup> Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are being destroyed. <sup>7</sup> But we speak God's wisdom, a hidden mystery, which God decreed before the ages for our glory <sup>8</sup> and which none of the rulers of this age

understood, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.<sup>9</sup> But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him”—<sup>10</sup> God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.<sup>11</sup> For what human knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God’s except the Spirit of God.<sup>12</sup> Now we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. [<sup>13</sup> And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.<sup>14</sup> Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God’s Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.<sup>15</sup> Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else’s scrutiny.<sup>16</sup> “For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.] The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (purple ACS p. 33) **Alleluia...**

GOSPEL: Matthew 5:13-20 The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:]<sup>13</sup> “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled under foot.<sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid.<sup>15</sup> People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.<sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.<sup>17</sup> “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.<sup>18</sup> For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.<sup>20</sup> For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY “O God of Light” (red hymnal #507)

INSTALLATION OF LEADERS IN THE CONGREGATION

The following people have been elected by Bethel Lutheran Church...

On behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ, I ask you: Will you accept and faithfully carry out the duties of the offices to which you have been elected?

**☒ I will, and I ask God to help me**

People of God, I ask you: Will you support these, your elected leaders, and will you share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all who are baptized?

**☑ We will, and we ask God to help us.**

APOSTLES' CREED (purple ACS p. 17-18)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION      Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

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

### *Meal*

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

OFFERTORY      "Give Me Jesus" arr. by Stan Pethel - Trombone Solo by Nicole Kleve

OFFERING PRAYER

**God of majesty, we return to you a portion of what you have entrusted to us. Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches, but on you, who richly provides for us. Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are suffering and in need. through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING (purple ACS p. 36)

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (purple ACS p. 36)

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

LORD'S PRAYER (purple ACS p. 39) **Our Father, who art in heaven...**

COMMUNION SONG (purple ACS p. 40) **Lamb of God...**

SONG DURING COMMUNION      "Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service" (red hymnal #712)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

### *Sending*

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

BLESSING

May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise + bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG      "Go, Make Disciples" (red hymnal #540)

DISMISSAL      Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy. **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE      "Jesus the Light of the World" arr. by Edwin T. Childs

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NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS: Ex 24:12-18; Ps 2; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matt 17:1-9

## Bethel's Mission Statement

Vibrantly open to the Spirit, Bethel Lutheran Church seeks to serve God and its neighbors by joyfully living into the good news of Jesus Christ.

### This week at Bethel

#### **Sunday, February 8**

- Worship: 9:00 a.m. with Council Installation
- Sunday school: following worship
- Intergenerational Sunday school with Pastor Molly: following worship

#### **Monday, February 9**

- Worship & Music Committee meeting: 5:00 p.m.
- Church Council meeting: 6:00 p.m.

#### **Wednesday, February 11**

- Bible study: 11:30 a.m.
- Quilting: 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
- Choir practice: 6:30 p.m.

#### **Sunday, February 15** (Transfiguration) Rev. Margo Martens, Supply Pastor

- Praise Worship: 9:00 a.m.
- Sunday school: following worship

**QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS?** Contact the church office at 320-395-2125 or [bethellutheranlp@gmail.com](mailto:bethellutheranlp@gmail.com). If you need emergency pastoral care, please call Pastor Molly Wills at 320-339-8169 or email her at [pastor@lpbethel.org](mailto:pastor@lpbethel.org).

**ADDRESS:** 77 Lincoln AVE N, Lester Prairie, MN 55354, (Mailing USPS: PO Box 207)

**WEBSITE:** [www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org) | **FACEBOOK:** [www.facebook.com/lpbethel](http://www.facebook.com/lpbethel)

**BULLETIN SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** Wednesday at noon

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:** 25<sup>th</sup> of the month

**VANCO GIVING:** Scan the QR code or visit [www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org)

under the "Give" section, or complete an application and submit it to the church office.

**TEXT GIVING:** To give, text dollar amount to **866-298-7547**



#### **CHURCH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**President:** (1 yr. term) David Gohl

952-358-0201; [david.g.m.gohl@gmail.com](mailto:david.g.m.gohl@gmail.com)

**Vice-President:** (2 yr. term) Jean Hallberg

507-430-2671; [jhallberg59@icloud.com](mailto:jhallberg59@icloud.com)

**Council Secretary:** (1 yr. term) Julie Hanson

320-485-7870 or 612-396-8038; [j3hanson@tds.net](mailto:j3hanson@tds.net)

**Treasurer:** (2 yr. term) Jill Duncan

320-420-6284; [treasurer@lpbethel.org](mailto:treasurer@lpbethel.org)

**Financial Secretary:** (1 yr. term) Stacy Meyer

320-620-1040; [finsec@lpbethel.org](mailto:finsec@lpbethel.org)

#### **CHURCH COUNCIL BOARD MEMBERS**

**Trustee Board:** (1 yr. term) Bryon Weisenburger

320-282-4747; [bryonw@usa.com](mailto:bryonw@usa.com)

**Trustee Board:** (2 yr. term) Jeff Hanson

320-485-7870 or 612-396-8374;

[j3hanson@tds.net](mailto:j3hanson@tds.net)

**Finance Board:** (1 yr. term) Sara Jepsen

605-760-0685; [candsjepsen@gmail.com](mailto:candsjepsen@gmail.com)

**Finance Board:** (2 yr. term) Peggy Wick

612-499-0186; [sully72828@gmail.com](mailto:sully72828@gmail.com)

**Education Board:** (1 yr. term) Katie Radtke

952-215-6878; [gemini.radtke@gmail.com](mailto:gemini.radtke@gmail.com)

**Education Board:** (2 yr. term)

## Announcements and Upcoming Events

**A SPECIAL THANKS** to all who helped in the kitchen for the funeral on January 24<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to those who donated cookies. We had enough to share on Sunday after church. To those who saw a need and just pitched in, whether before or during the meal, or helped clean up, THANK YOU! *The Committee, Jean, Jerry, Carolyn, and Cathy*

**ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18:** Lenten Meal: 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., Worship: 6:30 p.m.

**HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER:** Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m., February 25, March 4, 11, 18, & 25.

**LENTEN FAITH STORIES:** Please listen to the Holy Spirit and consider signing up on the narthex board to share your faith story/journey. This year, our Wednesday night readings will focus on food and how food and faith connect us to God. As written in *Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating*: “Created life is God’s love made tastable and given for the good of another. The mundane act of eating is thus a daily invitation to move responsibly and gratefully within this given life. It is a summons to commune with the divine Life that is presupposed and made manifest in every bite”. Some questions to contemplate are new to connect with the readings, but that does not mean you must follow them or even talk about food. It is simply another way to think about your relationship with God. For more information, please check the sign-up sheet. For questions, speak to Pastor Molly or send her an email ([pastor@lpbethel.org](mailto:pastor@lpbethel.org)).

**LENTEN MEALS:** Serving Wednesdays from 5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. Feb. 18 - Mar. 25. A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex for anyone who wants to help organize, prepare, and serve a meal for 35-40 people. A Thrivent Action Team grant will purchase all food ingredients for the meals. You will be provided with a card to buy your groceries. Contact Diane Horsman for the card or if you have questions. If you don’t want to plan/make a meal, you can sign up to bring a pan of bars or help clean up.

**WELCA LENTEN PROJECT – DIAPER DRIVE:** During the Lenten season, WELCA will be collecting diapers for Common Cup, the McLeod Emergency Food Shelf, and DAV (Disabled American Veterans), all in McLeod County. The greatest need is baby size 4-6 and adult diapers. Watch for a collection container in the Narthex. Thank you in advance for your support!

**BIBLES FOR 3<sup>rd</sup> GRADERS [& OLDER]:** If your child has not received a Bible from Bethel and they would like one, **please email Tamie at [bethellutheranlp@gmail.com](mailto:bethellutheranlp@gmail.com) by TODAY.** We will be giving out Bibles on **Sunday, March 15, 2026**, during the worship service.

**FIRST COMMUNION CLASS:** If you believe your child is ready for a First Communion class, please email Pastor Molly at [pastor@lpbethel.org](mailto:pastor@lpbethel.org). We will have the class on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, after the worship service, and celebrate First Communion during the worship service on Sunday, April 26.

**BETHEL BOOK CLUB – FEBRUARY:** *The Poppy Fields* by Nikki Erlick, Discussion date: Wed., Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m. All the books chosen as Bethel Book Club reads for 2026 are here and on our library shelf, along with a schedule of discussion dates. Won’t YOU consider joining us on the third Wednesday evening of each month as we learn and grow together? Thanks to Thrivent and Sara J. for writing the grant to purchase all the titles!

## Thank you to those serving today!

**GREETER:**

**ALTAR GUILD:** Judy A.

**CANDLELIGHTER:** Lennon & Lachlyn S.

**COMMUNION ASSISTANT:** Jaxen M.

**USHER:** Sara J.

**LECTOR:** Dave G.

**COFFEE:**

**TREATS:** Sara J.

## Serving next Sunday, February 15

**GREETER:**

**ALTAR GUILD:**

**CANDLELIGHTER:**

**COMMUNION ASSISTANT:**

**USHER:**

**LECTOR:**

**COFFEE:**

**TREATS:**

*All sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board in the narthex, outside the sanctuary.  
You can serve with family, friends, or on your own—no experience is necessary!  
We welcome volunteers of all ages and look forward to your involvement!  
Together, we can fulfill our mission and ministry!*

## Ways to Participate in Sunday Morning Worship

A **Greeter** welcomes every member and guest at the front door. This role involves making introductions, assisting those with full hands, providing directions, extending invitations, and sharing a warm smile. For questions, please call Ron Foust at 612-201-2351.

An **Usher** greets people at the sanctuary door, lights the candles before the service, distributes bulletins, informs parents about our nursery, collects offerings, guides individuals to communion, answers questions as they arise, and provides a welcoming and helpful presence for both members and guests! For questions, please call the office at 320-395-2125.

A **Lector** is responsible for reading scripture lessons during worship services. Occasionally, you may also be asked to assist with other parts of the service, such as reading prayers or liturgy. For questions, please call Cathy Houg at 320-282-2152.

A **Worship Assistant** helps the pastor during the service, primarily assisting with communion and baptisms. For questions, please call Pastor Molly at 320-339-8169.

**The Altar Guild** prepares the sanctuary for worship by arranging the sacraments, filling candles, and changing altar cloths. For questions, please call Judy Angvall at 612-501-3233.

Sign up to **Light the Altar Candles** before the worship service. During the Advent season, there are opportunities to light candles for the Advent wreath each week. For questions, please call Pastor Molly at 320-339-8169.

**Other ways to participate:** You could provide special music, offer flowers to decorate the sanctuary, deliver a children's message, or join the Worship & Music Committee. Contact the office if you need more information.