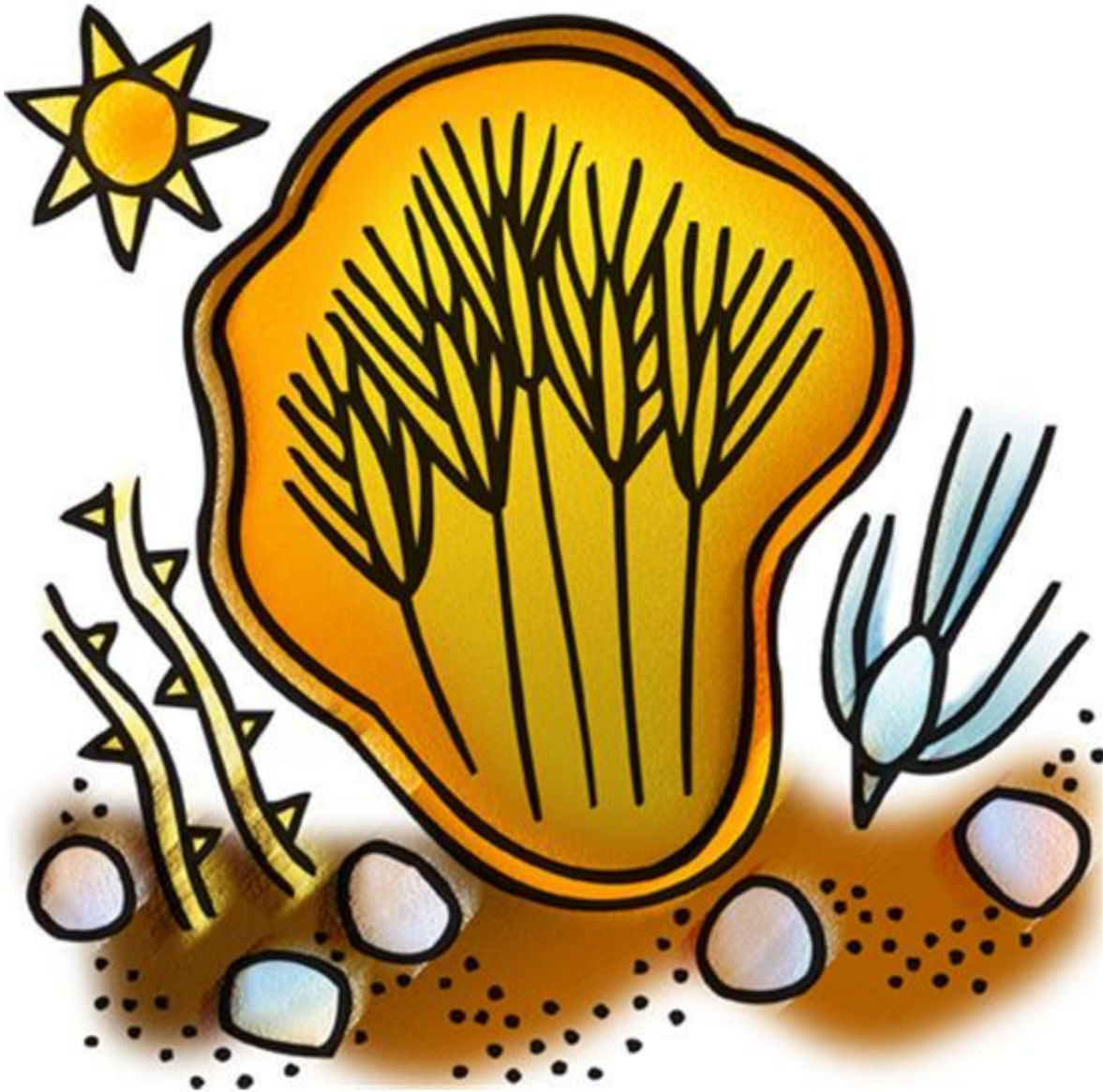


WELCOME TO BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH!

7th Sunday after Pentecost | Sunday, July 12, 2026

ELW Holy Communion Setting Eight

Rev. Molly Wills, Pastor | Jan Smith, Accompanist



GATHERING

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

(Congregational response in bold print)

MEDITATION TIME *Let All Things Now Living* arr. by Michael Larkin

All Things Bright and Beautiful & For the Beauty of the Earth arr. by Nancy Raabe

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP SONG *We Are Gathered Here*

WE ARE GATHERED HERE

Larry Olson
Karol Baer
David Lee Brown

$\text{♩} = 100$

E F#m7 G#m7 A E F#m7 G#m7 A

We are gathered here in the name (of the Maker). We are gathered here to sing God's praise.
(of the Savior)
(of the Spirit)

E F#m7 G#m7 A C#m B E

We are gathered here in the name (of the Maker). Cho- sen by God's grace.
(of the Savior)
(of the Spirit)

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CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, whose compassion endures forever. Amen.

Let us confess our sin to God.

Compassionate God, **we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy, and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.**

Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG *God of the Fertile Fields* (ACS 1063)

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of our Creator, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

KYRIE (ELW p. 184)

CANTICLE OF PRAISE (ELW P. 187) **This is the feast...**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

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

FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:10-13

A reading from Isaiah.¹⁰ For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose

and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. ¹² For you shall go out in joy and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. ¹³ Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle, and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 65: [1-8] 9-13 (responsive reading)

[¹ You are to be praised, O God, in Zion; to you shall vows be fulfilled.

² **To you, the one who answers prayer, to you all flesh shall come.**

³ Our sins are stronger than we are, but you blot out our transgressions.

⁴ **Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your courts to dwell there! They will be satisfied by the beauty of your house, by the holiness of your temple.**

⁵ Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation, O hope of all the ends of the earth and of the oceans far away.

⁶ **You make firm the mountains by your power; you are girded about with might.**

⁷ You still the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of the peoples.

⁸ **Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs; you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy.]**

⁹ You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous; the river of God is full of water.

You prepare the grain, for so you provide for the earth.

¹⁰ **You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges; with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.**

¹¹ You crown the year with your goodness, and your paths overflow with plenty.

¹² **May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing, and the hills be clothed with joy.**

¹³ May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak themselves with grain; let them shout for joy and sing.

SECOND READING: Romans 8:1-11

A reading from Romans ¹ Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed, it cannot, ⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 188)

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹ That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ² Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³ And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶ But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ If you have ears, hear!" ¹⁸ "Hear, then, the parable of the sower. ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ yet such a person has no root but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this age and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³ But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *O God, Whose Word Well-Planted* (ACS 975)

APOSTLES' CREED (ELW p. 105)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION God of grace, **hear 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.

OFFERING SONG *Now the Feast of Celebration* (ELW 167)

OFFERING PRAYER

Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts you first gave to us. Loosen the bonds these material things have wrapped around us. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your gifts and love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

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.**

PREFACE

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 190)

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 191)

COMMUNION

COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 191)

SONG DURING COMMUNION *Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil* (ELW 512)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

SENDING

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

BLESSING

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, + one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG *On What Has Now Been Sown* (ELW 550)

DISMISSAL Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news! **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE *For the Beauty of the Earth* arr. by Carol Tornquist

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NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS: Is 44:6-8; Ps 86:11-17; Rom 8:12-25; Matt 13:24-30, 36-43

THANK YOU TO THOSE SERVING TODAY!

Questions or Requests?

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.

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

WEBSITE: www.lpbethel.org

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/lpbethel

BULLETIN SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Wednesday at noon

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: 25th of the month

This week at Bethel

Sunday, July 12

- Worship: 9 a.m.

Monday, July 13 (evening office hours)

- Worship & Music committee meeting: 5 p.m.
- Council meeting: 6 p.m.

Wednesday, July 15 (office hours)

- Bible study: 11:30 a.m.
- (Poolside Plates @ picnic shelter noon- 1 p.m.)
- Quilting: 1:00 p.m.
- Book club discussion: 6:30 p.m.
- Women's Bible study: 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 18

- (Prairie Days Burger Stand shift)

Sunday, July 19

- Outdoor Praise Worship: 9 a.m.

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.



Bethel's Wish List

If you're looking for more ways to support our church community, please check out Bethel's Wish List on the bulletin boards in the narthex or by the offices. Please let a council member know if you would like to donate! Thank you to those who have already donated from the list!

TEXT GIVING

To give, text the dollar amount to **866-298-7547** or **VANCO GIVING**

Scan the QR code

or visit www.lpbethel.org

Click under the "Give" section, or complete an application form [from the narthex] and submit it to the church office.



One of the most powerful things you can do for this congregation is to give consistently — even a small, regular gift helps us plan, budget, and say yes to opportunities when they come along.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW ALTAR CHAIRPERSON: We are looking for someone to take the role of Altar Chairperson. If you are interested, please let Judy know asap so she can teach you the process. All are welcome to get involved! Thanks for considering!

BETHEL PRAIRIE DAYS PARADE FLOAT: We are looking for volunteers to help plan and create a float for the upcoming Prairie Days parade on July 18. Nicole K. and Jan S. have already expressed their interest in being involved, but they need additional help to bring this project to life. If you are interested in joining the team, please reach out to them for more information.

VOLUNTEER FOR PRAIRIE DAYS BURGER STAND: The Prairie Days committee is looking for volunteers to work the Burger Stand on Saturday, July 18, from 1:00-3:00 p.m or 3:00-4:00 p.m. Please reach out to Peggy Wick if you are interested in volunteering.

“A FOR ALABASTER” WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY: All women are invited and encouraged to attend Bible study on Wednesdays, July 8, 15, & 22, from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the church narthex. The book *A is for Alabaster*, written by Anna Carter Florence, will take us on an engaging tour of the Old and New Testaments with reflections that reveal wisdom from long ago and spark imagination to apply wisdom to our lives today. You are always invited to bring a friend! (If you have questions, please ask Jan Smith.)

POOLSIDE PLATES—Wednesday, July 15, & August 19, serving Noon-1:00 p.m. (or until the food is gone) Free meals for any Lester Prairie kids under age 16 at the 2nd Ave. Park Picnic Shelter. If you have questions, contact Terri Helland, terrihelland@gmail.com. Sponsored by Bethel Lutheran Church Endowment grant, Lester Prairie Youth Task Force, Lester Prairie Lions Club, St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, and St. Paul’s Sandwich Ministry, Lester Prairie.

JOIN US FOR OUTDOOR WORSHIP—Sunday, July 19 & Sunday, August 16, 9:00 a.m.

Remember to bring a blanket or lawn chairs. Worship will be held indoors if the weather is bad. *(Stay for VBS on the 16th; everyone is welcome to join in the fun!)*

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN—Tuesday, July 21, 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. (Arrive by 4:45 p.m.)

Our church will be serving a shift at Feed My Starving Children, Chanhassen location, 18732 Lake DR E, Chanhassen, MN 55317. Volunteers may meet at the Chanhassen site or carpool from the church. All ages are welcome to join this meaningful, hands-on way to help children around the world. Please add your name to the sign-up sheet in the narthex by Sunday, July 6. Nicole Kleve can answer any questions you may have. Thank you for helping us make a difference!

LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION: 32nd Annual Best Ball Golf Tournament, Friday, July 24th

Registration: 2:30 p.m., Shotgun Start: 3:00 p.m., Price: \$ 85.00 per golfer (includes golf cart, green fees, meal, prizes, and a donation to LMM), Redwood Falls Golf Club, Redwood Falls, MN. Registration deadline is Monday, July 20th. Registration forms are available from the church office.

GLASS MOSIAC & MEAL EVENT—Monday, July 27, 6:00 p.m.

This event is planned for Bethel women and girls ages 15 and up. We will start with a meal followed by the mosaic project, instructed by Linda Reinert of Mosaics at the Farm. No prior mosaic experience is necessary. All glass is cut and tumbled, ensuring there are no sharp edges.

The registration deadline is Wednesday, July 22. Registration is not complete until payment is received. Cost is \$20 per person. For questions, contact Jean Hallberg at 507-430-2671 or email jhallberg59@icloud.com.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL IS COMING! Just Like Me: Digging In and Growing Deep

Everyone is invited to join us at Bethel on **Sundays, August 2, 9, and 16**, after worship until 12:30 p.m. (lunch at noon) for an inclusive, multi-age Vacation Bible School centered on the active faith lives of children, youth, and families, and the real-world context in which we live. We will practice sharing what we have, finding our community, and using our voices for others. We will meet in small groups for Bible lessons and hands-on activities appropriate for each age group. Each session will also include time for all age groups to gather, sing, share an activity, eat, and end the day together. To register, sign the sheet in the narthex or email bethellutheranlp@gmail.com. All participants are asked to fill out a participation form. If you have questions, ask Jan S. or Katie R.

ATTENTION THRIVENT MEMBERS—Can You Help Us?

One of the adult activities during Vacation Bible School will be to complete a service project for people around the world in need of clean water. Each Thrivent member can order and receive one “Water Filter Kit” at no cost each year. These can be ordered online-go to your Thrivent account and choose “Get a Thrivent Cause Kit”. The kit you want to order is the “Water Filter Kit” (not the “Solar Light Build”). Once you order the kit, you will receive it in about a week. Bring the box to church and place it near the Common Cup Corner. We will store it and put the filters together in August. **(Each filter will provide clean water for 12 people for 10 years.)**

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL HELP NEEDED! We are looking for people who are willing to help facilitate Bible story lessons for children, youth, and adults during Vacation Bible School. The lessons will be planned and the materials gathered for you. You may volunteer to teach one lesson once, or you may choose to teach a lesson each day of VBS. We are very flexible! It will also be just fine for two people to work as a team. We are also seeking people willing to prepare food for meals. Of course, the facilitators and cooks need people to teach and feed, so registering to attend is an important task too! **The “sign-up” to help is in the church narthex.**

BETHEL COMMUNITY GARDEN NEEDS YOU! We are looking for volunteers to help us tend this season’s garden—whether you have a green thumb or just a willing spirit, there’s a place for you here. We need help with planting, weeding, harvesting, and general maintenance. Every hour of help makes a difference in what we can grow and share with others.

COMMON CUP FOOD DONATIONS: We are collecting applesauce cups and fruit cups for the food program at Common Cup Ministries. Your donations may be left in the basket in the “Common Cup Corner” in the narthex.

IMPORTANT CHANGES IN THE THRIVENT CHOICE PROGRAM: ALL Thrivent members now receive Choice Dollars annually, not just those with certain policies. Those Dollars are available in FULL at the beginning of each year—**2026 Choice Dollars are available to direct NOW!** All Dollars must be directed by the end of the calendar year, December 31, rather than the former March 31 date. We encourage all Thrivent members to visit your online account SOON and consider directing your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Bethel Lutheran Church! Thank you!