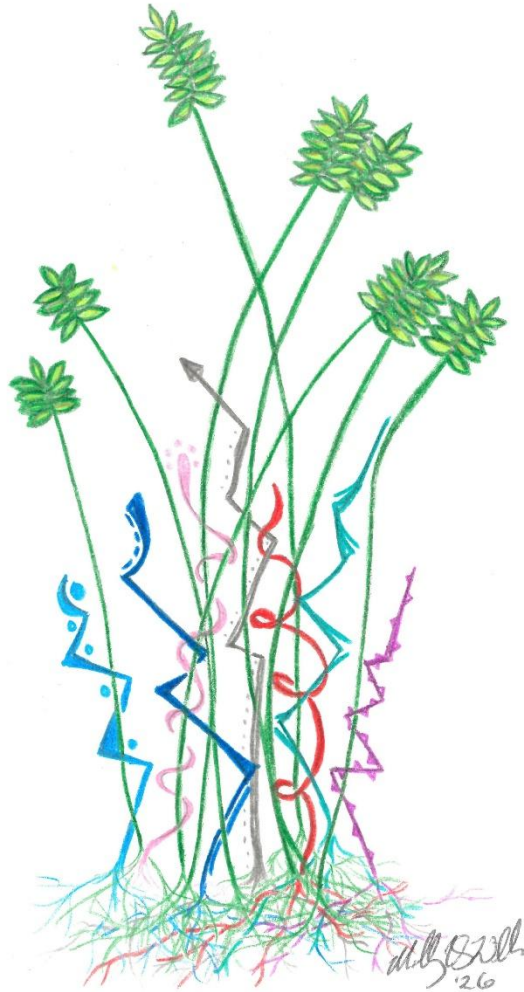


WELCOME TO BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH!

8th Sunday after Pentecost | Sunday, July 19, 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 *Blessed Be Your Name* arr. by Victor Labenske

Here I Am to Worship arr. Victor Labenske

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP SONG *How Shall I Call You* (GB 84)

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.**

SONG OF PRAISE *Everlasting God* (GB 118)

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.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit, nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE *Love, Love* (GB 18)

WORD

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

FIRST READING: Isaiah 44:6-8

A reading from Isaiah. ⁶ Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last; besides me there is no god. ⁷ Who is like me? Let them proclaim it; let them declare and set it forth before me. Who has announced from of old the things to come? Let them tell us what is yet to be. ⁸ Do not fear or be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? You are my witnesses! Is there any god besides me? There is no other rock; I know not one.

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

PSALM: Psalm 86:11-17 (responsive reading)

¹¹ Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

¹² **I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and glorify your name forevermore.**

¹³ For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the pit of death.

¹⁴ **The arrogant rise up against me, O God, and a band of violent people seeks my life; they have not set you before their eyes.**

¹⁵ But you, O Lord, are gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.

¹⁶ **Turn to me and have mercy on me; give your strength to your servant, and save the child of your handmaid.**

¹⁷ **Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame; because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.**

SECOND READING: Romans 8:12-25

A reading from Romans. ¹² So then, brothers and sisters, we are obligated, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—¹³ for if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption. When we cry,

“Abba! Father!” ¹⁶ it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if we in fact suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. ¹⁸ I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God, ²⁰ for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its enslavement to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning together as it suffers together the pains of labor, ²³ and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what one already sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *Help Us O Lord* (repeat 2x)

Help us, O Lord, to hear your word. Open our hearts to feel your word. Give us the strength to live your word each day.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

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

²⁴ [Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field, ²⁵ but while everybody was asleep an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away. ²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷ And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ ²⁸ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ ²⁹ But he replied, ‘No, for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰ Let both of them grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ ” ³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” ³⁷ He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸ the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴² and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

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

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

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 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 *Father, I Adore You* (GB 1)

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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

LORD'S PRAYER

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

SONG DURING COMMUNION *Grace Alone* (GB 70)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

SENDING

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

BENEDICTION SONG *Blessing*

May God bless you and keep you. May God's face shine upon you. May God look upon you with favor and give you peace, and give you peace, and give you peace. Amen.

BLESSING

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

SENDING SONG *The River is Here* (GB 121)

DISMISSAL Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news! **Thanks be to God.**
POSTLUDE *How Great Is Our God* arr. by Victor Labenske
From sundaysandseasons.com | Copyright © 2026 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS: 1 Kings 3:5-12; Ps 119:129-136; Rom 8:26-39; Matt 13:31-33, 44-52
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

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, July 19

- Outdoor Worship: 9 a.m.
- *(LP Community Swim Night, 7-9 p.m., free pizza at the picnic shelter at 7 p.m. until it's gone!)*

Monday, July 20 (home hours)

Tuesday, July 21

- *(Feed My Starving Children: 4:45-6:30 p.m. 18732 Lake DR E, Chanhassen, MN 55317)*

Wednesday, July 22 (office hours)

- Mosaic event registration deadline is today!
- Bible study: 11:30 a.m.
- Quilting: 1:00 p.m.
- MEFS Outreach bus: 2:30 p.m., BLC parking lot
- Women's Bible study: 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 26

- Worship: 9 a.m.

"When did you last take a look at what you're giving to the church? Now is a great time to sit down, pray about it, and ask whether your giving still reflects where your heart is."

Matthew 6:21 — "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."



WAYS TO GIVE

- **TEXT GIVING:** Text the dollar amount to **866-298-7547**
- **VANCO GIVING:** Scan QR code



- **VISIT www.lpbethel.org:** Click under the "Give" section
- **COMPLETE AN APPLICATION FORM** [found on the narthex wall] and submit it to the church office.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW ALTAR CHAIRPERSON NEEDED: **We are seeking a volunteer to serve as the Altar Chairperson.** The role involves preparing the sanctuary for worship, including arranging the sacraments, filling the oil altar candles, changing altar cloths, preparing for baptisms, and ordering supplies or coordinating with others for assistance. If you are interested in this position, contact Judy Angvall at 612-501-3233 as soon as possible so she can guide you through the process. *Additionally, a sign-up sheet is available on the bulletin board for families or individuals who would like to volunteer for any Sunday. A sign-up rotation helps ensure that no one person is solely responsible every week, allowing us to continue having weekly communion.*

COMMON CUP FACILITATES A SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE annually for families in McLeod County (including Lester Prairie) who need support in obtaining school supplies for their children. This year, Bethel and churches in the area have been asked to contribute to the drive by making financial donations. Common Cup Ministries will then purchase the exact items needed.

How can you help? On **Sunday, July 26th**, a pencil pouch will be available at church for you to contribute to this cause. (Your donations may also be given to Jill Duncan.) Checks may be written to Bethel or WELCA. Bethel WELCA has offered to match up to \$150.00! (WOW) Let's see if we can meet their challenge!

COMMON CUP DONATIONS: Please bring in your donations of applesauce cups and fruit cups for the food program at Common Cup Ministries. You can leave them in the basket in the "Common Cup Corner" of the narthex. Thank you!

GLASS MOSAIC & 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.

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.**

JOIN US FOR NATIONAL NIGHT OUT! Bethel members will be handing out frozen treats on Tuesday, August 4, at the Downtown Square Park in Lester Prairie.

JOIN US FOR OUTDOOR WORSHIP—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 Intergenerational Vacation Bible School-everyone is welcome to join in the fun!)

POOLSIDE PLATES—Wednesday, 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 at 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.

BETHEL’S WISH LIST: If you’re looking for more ways to support our church community, please check out **Bethel’s Wish List: riding lawn mower and Security camera system.** Please let a council member know if you would like to donate! Thank you to those who have already donated!

SAVE THE DATE: Women’s Retreat at Water’s Edge, Medayto Lodge, September 11-13

