

WELCOME TO BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH!

6th Sunday after Pentecost | Sunday, July 5, 2026

ELW Holy Communion Setting Eight

Rev. LaDonna Ekern, Supply Pastor | Jan Smith, Accompanist

GATHERING

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

(Congregational response in bold print)

MEDITATION TIME *Trumpet Tune on "St. Denio" arr. by David Lasky*

Hymn of Promise arr. by Jeremy Bankson

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP SONG *We Are Gathered Here*

WE ARE GATHERED HERE

Larry Olson
Karol Baer
David Lee Brown

The musical score for 'We Are Gathered Here' is written for piano and voice. It features a treble and bass clef staff with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature (C). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 100. The score is divided into two systems. The first system has a treble staff with chords E, F#m7, G#m7, A, E, F#m7, G#m7, A and a bass staff with a single line of music. The lyrics '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)' are written below the treble staff. The second system has a treble staff with chords E, F#m7, G#m7, A, C#m, B, E and a bass staff with a single line of music. The lyrics 'We are gathered here in the name (of the Maker). Cho- sen by God's grace. (of the Savior) (of the Spirit)' are written below the treble staff.

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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 *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* (ELW 742)

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

You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

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

FIRST READING: Zechariah 9:9-12

A reading from Zechariah. ⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. ¹⁰ He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. ¹¹ As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. ¹² Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 145:8-14 (responsive reading)

⁸ The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

⁹ **LORD, you are good to all, and your compassion is over all your works.**

¹⁰ All your works shall praise you, O LORD, and your faithful ones shall bless you.

¹¹ **They shall tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your power,**

¹² that all people may know of your power and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

¹³ **Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; your dominion endures throughout all ages. You, LORD, are faithful in all your words, and loving in all your works.**

¹⁴ The Lord upholds all those who fall and lifts up those who are bowed down.

SECOND READING: Romans 7:15-25a

A reading from Romans.

¹⁵ I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ But in fact it is no longer I who do it but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that the good does not dwell within me, that is, in my flesh. For the desire to do the good lies close at hand, but not the ability. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it but sin that dwells within me. ²¹ So I find it to be a law that, when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, ²³ but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴ Wretched person that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ^{25a} Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 188)

GOSPEL: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

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

[Jesus spoke to the crowd saying:] ¹⁶ “To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another, ¹⁷ ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.’ ¹⁸ “For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; ¹⁹ the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.” ²⁵ At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶ yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *Day by Day* (ELW 790)

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

HYMN *The Lord's Prayer* (GB 134)

COMMUNION

COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 191)

SONG DURING COMMUNION *In God Alone* (ACS 1031) (Repeat as needed)

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 *Just a Closer Walk with Thee* (ELW 697)

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE *Postlude on "Hyfrydol"* arr. by David Lasky

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NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS: Is 55:10-13; Ps 65: [1-8] 9-13; Rom 8:1-11; Matt 13:1-9, 18-23

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.

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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 5

Thank you, Pastor LaDonna, for leading us in worship today, and Happy Birthday!

- Worship: 9:00 a.m.

Tuesday, July 7 (office hours)

Wednesday, July 8 (office hours)

- Bible study: 11:30 a.m.
- Quilting: 1:00 p.m.
- MEFS Outreach bus, Bethel parking lot: 2:30 p.m.
- Women's Bible study: 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 12

- Worship: 9:00 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.



"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."
1 Peter 4:10



ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

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!

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. **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.