

WELCOME TO BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH!

12th Sunday after Pentecost | Sunday, August 16, 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 *Here I Am to Worship* by Tim Hughes

The Power of Your Love arr. by Victor Labenske

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP SONG *Come, Now is the Time to Worship* (GB 105)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

We gather in God's name; **we claim Christ's promised presence.**

My siblings in Christ, not out of dread and fear, but believing in the understanding and forgiveness of God, let us rid ourselves of what we need to carry no longer.

Let us pray.

Eternal Maker of the endless heavens, lowly Christ, befriender of the changing earth, Holy Spirit, wind over the flowing waters, in earth, sea, and sky you are ever present.

O hidden mystery, sun behind all suns, soul within all souls, in everything we touch, in everyone we meet, you are there, and we give you thanks.

But where we have not touched but trampled you in creation, where we have not honored you but avoided you in one another, where we have not received but rejected your goodness, forgive us, and hear our plea for your pardon.

Holy God, **holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

Know that God is good, and that those who are truly sorry God forgives what is past and enables us to begin again.

Once we were no people, now we are God's people. Once we were beyond God's mercy; now that mercy is given to us.

So let us live as those who treasure God's costly generosity, by safeguarding God's earth, delighting in its people, and loving our Maker to whom be glory forever.

SONG OF PRAISE *All Who Are Thirsty* (GB 103)

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

God of all peoples, your arms reach out to embrace all those who call upon you. Teach us as disciples of your Son to love the world with compassion and constancy, that your name may be known throughout the earth, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE *Let Your Love Roll On*

LET YOUR LOVE ROLL ON

Larry Olson

♩ = 104

G C D C

Let your love roll on, love roll on, like riv - ers of heal - ing,

D G C D

riv - ers of hope. Let your love roll on, love roll on, like

C D G C G D Fine - G

riv - ers of heal-ing, riv - ers of hope for the world. *Fine - G*

G C G D G C G D

In the dark - ness, in the light, in the won - der of this life.
To the thirst - y, to the cold, to the young and to the old.

G C G D G C Em D

In the danc - ing, in the tears, in the strug - gles, through all of the years.
To the hun - gry, to the poor, to the stran - ger whose lost at your door.

WORD

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

FIRST READING: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8 ¹ Thus says the LORD: Maintain justice, and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come and my deliverance be revealed. ⁶ And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath and do not profane it and hold fast my covenant—⁷ these I will bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar, for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. ⁸ Thus says the Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel: I will gather others to them besides those already gathered. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 67 (responsive reading)

¹ May God be merciful to us and bless us; may the light of God's face shine upon us.

² **Let your way be known upon earth, your saving health among all nations.**

³ Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.

⁴ **Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide all the nations on earth.**

⁵ Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.

⁶ **The earth has brought forth its increase; God, our own God, has blessed us.**

⁷ May God give us blessing, and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe.

SECOND READING: Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

A reading from Romans. [Paul writes:] ¹ I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. ^{2a} God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. ²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹ so also they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they also may now receive mercy. ³² For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all. 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 15:[10-20] 21-28

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

[¹⁰ [Jesus] called the crowd to him and said to them, "Listen and understand:¹¹ it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles." ¹² Then the disciples approached and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?" ¹³ He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴ Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit." ¹⁵ But Peter said to him, "Explain this parable to us." ¹⁶ Then he said, "Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷ Do you not see that whatever goes

into the mouth enters the stomach and goes out into the sewer? ¹⁸ But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰ These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.”] ²¹ Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.” ²³ But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, “Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.” ²⁴ He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” ²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” ²⁶ He answered, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” ²⁷ She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed from that moment.

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

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

SONG OF THE DAY *I Will Call Upon the Lord* (GB 129)

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 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.

OFFERING SONG *God is Good (All the Time)* (GB 60)

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 *Renew Me (GB 77)*

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 *My Life is in You Lord (GB 75)*

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

POSTLUDE *You Are Holy* arr. by Nancy M. Raabe

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NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS: Is 51:1-6; Ps 138; Rom 12:1-8; Matt 16:13-20

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](tel:320-339-8169) or email her at pastor@lpbethel.org.

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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, August 16

- Outdoor Praise Worship: 9:00 a.m.
- Inter-Gen Vacation Bible School: 10:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Monday, August 17 (office hours)

Wednesday, August 19 (office hours)

- Bible study: 11:30 a.m.
- *(Poolside Plates: noon at the park)*
- MEFS Outreach bus: 2:30 p.m.
- Book club discussion: 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, August 23

- Worship: 9:00 a.m.

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.



If you've been part of this congregation for decades, your faithfulness has built something real and lasting here. And if you're newer to this community, you bring fresh energy and perspective that we genuinely need. Both are gifts.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS NEEDED: Anyone can volunteer, including team teaching! Please speak to Jan Smith at 952-261-4380 or kay_peterson69@yahoo.com, or Katie Radtke at 952-215-6878 or gemini.radtke@gmail.com if you are interested in this opportunity!

ALTAR DUTIES: A sign-up sheet is available on the bulletin board for families or individuals who are interested in volunteering for altar duties on Sundays. This sign-up rotation ensures that no one person is solely responsible every week, allowing us to continue having weekly communion. Additionally, if you would like to contribute your garden flowers for any Sunday, feel free to include your name on the Altar Duties list.

BETHEL T-SHIRTS: If you missed ordering a Bethel T-shirt last year, we are compiling another order now! Prices will likely be adjusted due to the size of the order. Both long-sleeve and short-sleeve shirts are available. Contact Jean Hallberg at 507-430-2671 to order a T-shirt.

SAVE THE DATE: God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday, September 13. We are looking for ways we can help a neighbor (anyone) in need. If you have any ideas, please speak to Pastor Molly.

LAST POOLSIDE PLATES—Wednesday, August 19, serving at noon; a free meal for any Lester Prairie kids under age 16 at the 2nd Ave. Park Picnic Shelter. Questions? Contact Terri H. at terrihelland@gmail.com. Sponsored by a Bethel Lutheran Church Endowment grant, LP Youth Task Force, LP Lions Club, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, and St. Paul's Sandwich Ministry, LP.

END OF SUMMER POTLUCK: Join us on **Wednesday, August 26 at 6:00 p.m.** in the church basement. Bring a dish to share. A fire will be going in our outdoor fire pit area to roast marshmallows and create your own s'more. All ingredients for the s'mores will be provided.

SIGN UP FOR WOMEN'S RETREAT: Women's Retreat at Water's Edge, Medayto Lodge, September 11-13, **Registration deadline: September 1, 2026.** Place your registration form and payment in the envelope on the retreat display at church or mail your form and payment to: Jill Duncan, PO Box 745, Lester Prairie, MN 55354.

NEW MEMBER INFORMATIONAL MEETING: There will be a meeting on **Sunday, September 6, following the service** in Pastor Molly's office for those who are interested in potentially becoming Bethel members. If you plan to come, please let Pastor Molly know.

CELEBRATION BANK: We celebrated and collected **\$117.64** in June and July. Thank you for sharing! Our Celebration Bank will continue through the end of August. Organizational items for the tools will be purchased for the garage.

THANK YOU to Bethel worshipers for their monetary donations to the Common Cup "**Back to School Supply Drive**"! A total of \$220.00 was collected from the congregation on July 26th, meeting the challenge of the WELCA group offering to match up to \$150.00 in donations! As a result, Common Cup Ministries gratefully received a **\$370.00 check from Bethel** to help fund this year's school supply drive!

COMMON CUP DONATIONS: We are collecting donations of applesauce cups and fruit cups for the food program at Common Cup Ministries. A collection basket is in the "Common Cup Corner" of the narthex. Thank you!

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 board for more information.