

*Gather the
wheat into
my barn*

MATTHEW 13:30

**July 23, 2023
8th Sunday after Pentecost
Bethany Lutheran Church (ELCA)**

**PRELUDE AND LIGHTING OF CANDLES
RINGING OF BELL
WELCOME**

The people of God stand.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

HYMN *Sing to the Lord of Harvest (ELW 694)*



1 Sing to the Lord of har - vest your songs of love and praise;
2 God makes the clouds drop fat - ness, the des - erts bloom and spring,
3 Bring to this sa - cred al - tar the gifts his good-ness gave,



with joy - ful hearts and voic - es your al - le - lu - ias raise;
the hills leap up in glad - ness, the val - leys laugh and sing.
the gold - en sheaves of har - vest, the souls Christ died to save.



by him the roll - ing sea - sons in fruit - ful or - der move;
God fills them with his full - ness, all things with large in - crease,
Your hearts lay down be - fore him when at his feet you fall,



sing to the Lord of har - vest a joy - ous song of love.
and crowns the year with good - ness, with plen - ty and with peace.
and with your lives a - dore him who gave his life for all.

GREETING

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

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.

The people of God are seated.

WORD

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

FIRST READING: Isaiah 44:6-8

There are no other gods besides God: the word of the LORD does not fail to come to pass. We can trust in God, through whom Israel—and we—are redeemed.

A reading from Isaiah.

⁶Thus 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.⁷Who 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. ⁸Do 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 86:11-17

¹¹Teach 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.**

¹³For 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.**

¹⁵But 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.**

¹⁷Show 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

For Paul, true spirituality means that we experience the reality of the Spirit, which enables us to pray as God's children, keeps us in solidarity with creation, and gives us unseen hope that God will liberate us and creation from bondage to death and decay.

A reading from Romans.

¹²So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—¹³for 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. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

¹⁸I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; ²³and 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. ²⁴For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The people of God stand.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *Halle, Halle, Hallelujah* ELW 172

Hal-le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal -
- le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le -
lu - iah. Hal - le - lu - iah. Hal - le - lu - iah.

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

Jesus tells a parable about the coexistence of good and evil in this world. God's judgment will remove all evildoers and causes of sin, but not until the end of human history.

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;²⁵but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And 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?' ²⁸He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' ²⁹But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let 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.' "

³⁶Then 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." ³⁷He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then 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.

The people of God are seated.

SERMON

The people of God stand.

HYMN For the Fruit of All Creation (ELW 679)



1 For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.
2 In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will is done.
3 For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God.



For these gifts to ev - 'ry na - tion, thanks be to God.
In the help we give our neigh - bor, God's will is done.
For the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God.



For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are sleep - ing,
In our world - wide task of car - ing for the hun - gry and de - spair - ing,
For the won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con - found us,



fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.
in the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will is done.
most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000

Music: AR HYD Y NOS, Welsh traditional

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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

Each petition ends with, "Lord, in your mercy." Those worshipping respond with the hymn below "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying" (ELW 752)



Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren pray - ing, Lord, send your Spir - it in this place;



Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren pray - ing, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

Text: Ken Medema, b. 1943

Music: CHILDREN PRAYING, Ken Medema

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Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The people of God are seated.

OFFERING

We are grateful for your gifts, and they are needed to continue the work of the church. For those worshipping online please visit our website (www.wbbethany.org) and click on the blue "Give Now" button on the home page. Thank you!

The people of God stand as the offering is brought forward.

OFFERTORY HYMN *Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil (ELW 512)*



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.



Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.



When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,



warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.



Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

Text: Handt Hanson, b. 1950

Music: GOOD SOIL, Handt Hanson

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OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

SENDING

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

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

Amen.

HYMN Love Divine, All Loves Excelling (ELW 631)



1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heav'n, to
 2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - 'ry
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, pure and spot - less



earth come down! Fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy
 trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -



faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,
 find thy prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,
 ly re - stored in thee! Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,



pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
 till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our



thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!

SENDING

Go in peace! Christ is with you!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

*Thank you for worshipping with us.
 Please join us for fellowship and refreshments in the Great Hall.*

OUR WORSHIP ASSISTANTS		
Ministers of:	Today	July 30
Music	Jill Barnhart	Jill Barnhart
Proclamation (Lector)	Wayne Frauenholtz	Dave Bahnsen
Minister of Technology	Paula Casper	Jill Taylor
Worship (Altar Care)	Nancy Bruns	Nancy Bruns



Thank you for worshipping with us today. Just as Jesus welcomed the stranger, we believe all are welcome here. Please join us again next week. For more information about our life together in Christ, visit: www.wbbethany.org

Ministry Opportunities This Week

Tonight July 23rd – Community meal 5:00-6:00PM in the Great Hall

Wednesday, July 26

7:00 AM — Men's Bible Study with Breakfast

Thursday, July 27th

6:00 AM — Women's Bible Study

1:00 PM — Quilting Group

Sunday, July 30

9:30 AM — Worship

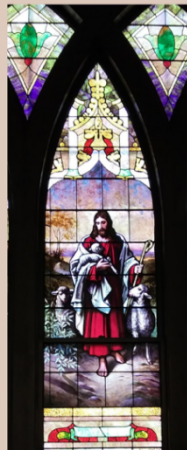
10:30 AM — Fellowship

Join us for the Community meal tonight.
5:00-6:00PM in the Great Hall!
Everyone is welcome.



OUR mission

To grow so deep in Christ through worship, education, and fellowship that we celebrate by reaching out to others.



Land Acknowledgement

Bethany Lutheran is located in the original and ancestral homelands of the Iowa, Sauk, Fox, Kickapoo and Ojibwe peoples, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

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