



The birds
of the air
make nests
in its shade

MARK 4:32

June 16, 2024

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
Bethany Lutheran Church (ELCA)

Introduction to the day

The mustard seed becomes a great shrub that shelters the birds, recalling ancient images of the tree of life. We'd expect a cedar or a sequoia, but Jesus finds the power of God better imaged in a tiny, no-account seed. It's not the way we expect divine activity to look. Yet the tree of life is here, in the cross around which we gather, the tree into which we are grafted through baptism, the true vine that nourishes us with its fruit in the cup we share. It may not appear all that impressive, but while nobody's looking it grows with a power beyond our understanding.

This worship is being streamed live via Facebook and will be posted to our Website and X (formerly Twitter).
The camera captures anyone in the first few pews of our worship space and beyond extending to the altar.

PRELUDE
LIGHTING OF CANDLES
RINGING OF BELL
WELCOME

GATHERING

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

The assembly stands.

Please respond with the words printed in bold.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS (ELW p. 94)

In the name of the Father,
and of the ✠ Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG *Shine, Jesus, Shine* (ELW 671) See next page.

Refrain

Shine, Je - sus, shine, fill this land with the Fa - ther's glo - ry;
 blaze, Spir - it, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
 Flow, riv - er, flow, flood the na - tions with grace and mer - cy;
 send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light!

1 Lord, the light of your love is shin - ing, in the midst of the
 2 As we gaze on your king - ly bright-ness, so our fac - es dis -
 dark - ness, shin - ing; Je - sus, light of the world, shine up - on us,
 play your like - ness, ev - er chang - ing from glo - ry to glo - ry,
 set us free by the truth you now bring us.
 mir - rored here, may our lives tell your sto - ry.

Refrain

Shine on me, shine on me:
 Shine on me, shine on me:

Text: Graham Kendrick, b. 1950
 Music: Graham Kendrick
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SHINE, JESUS, SHINE
 99 10 10 33 and refrain

REETING (ELW p. 184)

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 (ELW p. 188)

Let us pray.

O God, you are the tree of life, offering shelter to all the world. Graft us into yourself and nurture our growth, that we may bear your truth and love to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

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

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 17:22-24

Tree imagery is used in a messianic prophecy to tell how the LORD will choose someone from Judah's royal family (the cedar tree) to reign over all creation. This tree will be planted on Mount Zion, the location of the holy temple.

A reading from Ezekiel.

²²Thus says the Lord GOD:

I myself will take a sprig
from the lofty top of a cedar;
I will set it out.

I will break off a tender one
from the topmost of its young twigs;
I myself will plant it
on a high and lofty mountain.

²³On the mountain height of Israel
I will plant it,
in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit,
and become a noble cedar.
Under it every kind of bird will live;
in the shade of its branches will nest
winged creatures of every kind.

²⁴All the trees of the field shall know
that I am the LORD.
I bring low the high tree,
I make high the low tree;
I dry up the green tree
and make the dry tree flourish.
I the LORD have spoken;
I will accomplish it.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 92:1-4, 12-15

¹It is a good thing to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praise to your name, O Most High;

²**to herald your love in the morning
and your faithfulness at night;**

³on the psaltery, and on the lyre,
and to the melody of the harp.

⁴**For you have made me glad by your acts, O LORD;
and I shout for joy because of the works of your hands.**

¹²The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree,
and shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon.

¹³**Those who are planted in the house of the LORD
shall flourish in the courts of our God;**

¹⁴they shall still bear fruit in old age;
they shall be green and succulent;

¹⁵**that they may show how upright the LORD is,
my rock, in whom there is no injustice.**

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:6-10, 14-17

Paul encourages believers to live by faith and not by sight. We do not consider Jesus from a human perspective but through the eyes of faith, believing he died for all and was raised. All who are in Christ are now in God's new creation.

A reading from Second Corinthians.

⁶So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord—⁷for we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. ¹⁰For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

¹⁴For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. ¹⁵And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.

¹⁶From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

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 - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah.

GOSPEL: Mark 4:26-34

Jesus frequently uses parables to teach ordinary people as they are able to hear and understand. Images of sowing and growing show the vitality of God’s kingdom.

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁶[Jesus] said, “The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground,²⁷and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. ²⁸The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. ²⁹But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.”

³⁰He also said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? ³¹It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; ³²yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

³³With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; ³⁴he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY *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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APOSTLES' CREED (ELW p. 189)

**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

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 on the next page, "Hear Our Prayer" (ELW 178).



Hear our prayer, hear our prayer, Lord, make us whole:



peace to all peo - ple, hope for each soul.



God of grace, in this place, hear now our prayer.

Text and music: Paul Andress, b. 1956
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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 (ELW p. 189)

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The assembly is seated.

OFFERING (ELW p. 190)

We are grateful for your gifts, and they are needed to continue the work of the church. For those worshipping online, options on ways to give are found on our website (www.wbbethany.org). Thank you! After the offering is gathered, the people of God stand and sing the hymn below as the gifts are brought forward.

OFFERTORY HYMN Lord, Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful (ELW 184)



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that



we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of



all; u - nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble



with your pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER (ELW p. 190)

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

DIALOGUE (ELW p. 190)

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 (ELW p. 190)

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 190)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE (ELW p. 190)

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 191)

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION (ELW p. 191)

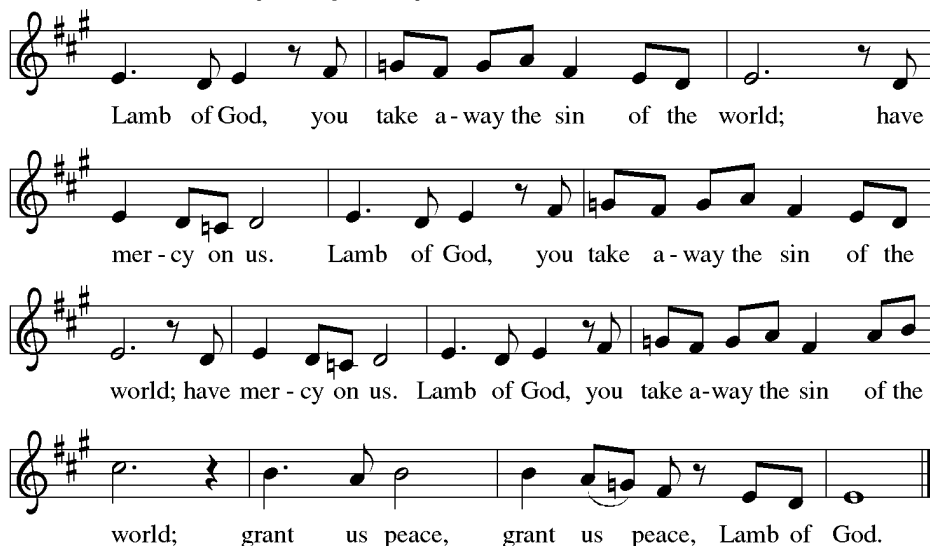
Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

The assembly is seated.

COMMUNION

Communion today will be distributed around the altar. The cups in the center of the tray contain white grape juice. All other cups are wine. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request. All gathered who believe Jesus Christ is their Lord and Savior are invited to come to Holy Communion with repentant hearts believing that Christ forgives our sins and guides our lives. Strengthened, forgiven, and nourished through this meal the Spirit sends us forth in service and to proclaim the good news of Christ's love. Children and adults who do not take communion may come forward for a blessing.

COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 191)



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

By Your Hand You Feed Your People (ELW 469)



1 By your hand you feed your peo - ple, food of an - gels, heav-en's bread.
2 In this meal we taste your sweet-ness, bread for hun - ger, wine of peace.
3 Send us now with faith and cour - age to the hun - gry, lost, be - reaved.



For these gifts we did not la - bor, by your grace have we been fed:
Ho - ly word and ho - ly wis - dom sat - is - fy our deep - est needs.
In our liv - ing and our dy - ing, we be - come what we re - ceive:



Christ's own bod - y, blessed and bro - ken, cup o'er - flow - ing, life out - poured,



giv - en as a liv - ing to - ken of your world re - deemed, re - stored.

Text: Susan R. Briehl, b. 1952
Music: CAMROSE, Marty Haugen, b. 1950
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800.442.3358 w All rights reserved. Used by permission.

As the Grains of Wheat (ELW 465)



As the grains of wheat once scat - tered on the hill were



gath - ered in - to one to be - come our bread; so may all your peo - ple from



all the ends of earth be gath - ered in - to one in you.



1 As this cup of bless - ing is shared with - in our midst,
2 Let this be a fore - taste of all that is to come when



may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

Text: Didache, 2nd cent.; Marty Haugen, b. 1950
Music: AS THE GRAINS, Marty Haugen
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The assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (ELW p. 191)

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SENDING SONG *Sent Forth by God's Blessing* (ELW 547)



1 Sent forth by God's bless - ing, our true faith con - fess - ing,
2 With praise and thanks - giv - ing to God ev - er - liv - ing,



the peo - ple of God from this dwell - ing take leave.
the tasks of our ev - 'ry - day life we will face—



The sup - per is end - ed. Oh, now be ex - tend - ed
our faith ev - er shar - ing, in love ev - er car - ing,



the fruits of this ser - vice in all who be - lieve.
em - brac - ing God's chil - dren, the whole hu - man race.



The seed of Christ's teach - ing, re - cep - tive souls
With your feast you feed us, with your light now



reach - ing, shall blos - som in ac - tion for God and for all.
lead us; u - nite us as one in this life that we share.



Your grace shall in - cite us, your love shall u - nite us
Then may all the liv - ing with praise and thanks - giv - ing



to work for your king - dom and an - swer your call.
give hon - or to Christ and his name that we bear.

BLESSING (ELW p. 192)

Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

DISMISSAL (ELW p. 192)

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

Please join us for fellowship and refreshments in the Great Hall following worship.



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

OUR WORSHIP ASSISTANTS		
Ministers of:	Today	June 23
Music	Jill Barnhart	Jill Barnhart
Proclamation (Lector)	Wayne Frauenholtz	Phil Hougen
Hospitality (Greeter)	Linda & John Black	Anne & Jamie Fetzer
Technology	Dale Swenson	Dave Poppen
Worship (Altar Care)	Scott & Amber Marsh	Scott & Amber Marsh

START the PARTY VBS
Celebrate the Good News

July 15-18
5:30-8:00 PM
 Dinner served at 5:30 pm

Incoming Preschool- 6th Grade

REGISTER NOW > bit.ly/bethanyvbs24

Volunteers Needed!
 Sign-up here: bit.ly/blcvolunteer24

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