



**August 25, 2024**

14th Sunday after Pentecost

Bethany Lutheran Church (ELCA)

### **Introduction to the day**

In today's gospel many people take offense at Jesus' invitation to eat his flesh and drink his blood; even many of Jesus' disciples peel off. This is the backdrop in John's gospel for Peter's confession of faith. "To whom can we go?" asks Peter, in words we sometimes sing just before the gospel is read. "You have the words of eternal life." In order to take such a stand, as Peter and Joshua did, Paul tells us to arm ourselves with the word of God. We pray in the Spirit that we might be bold ambassadors of the gospel.

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.

**PREDLUDE**  
**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)**

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.**

**GATHERING SONG *Lead On, O King Eternal!* (ELW 805)**



1 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal! The day of march has come;  
2 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal, till sin's fierce war shall cease,  
3 Lead on, O King e - ter - nal: we fol - low, not with fears,



hence-forth in fields of con - quest your tents will be our home.  
and ho - li - ness shall whis - per the sweet a - men of peace;  
for glad-ness breaks like morn - ing wher - e'er your face ap - pears.



Through days of prep - a - ra - tion your grace has made us strong;  
for not with swords loud clash - ing, nor roll of stir-ring drums,  
Your cross is lift - ed o'er us; we jour - ney in its light;



and now, O King e - ter - nal, we lift our bat - tle song.  
but deeds of love and mer - cy the heav'n - ly king - dom comes.  
the crown a - waits the con - quest; lead on, O God of might!

## **GREETING (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.

Holy God, your word feeds your people with life that is eternal. Direct our choices and preserve us in your truth, that, renouncing what is false and evil, we may live in you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

The assembly is seated.

## **WORD**

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

### **FIRST READING: Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18**

*In the Near East, covenant means “agreement” or “alliance.” It describes relationships and is the primary word used to characterize the relationship between God and Israel. By delivering Israel, God has already begun the relationship. Joshua calls upon the people to respond.*

A reading from Joshua.

<sup>1</sup>Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. <sup>2a</sup>And Joshua said to all the people, <sup>14</sup>“Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. <sup>15</sup>Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

<sup>16</sup>Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; <sup>17</sup>for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; <sup>18</sup>and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.”

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **PSALM 34:15-22**

<sup>15</sup>The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous,  
and God’s ears are open to their cry.

<sup>16</sup>**The face of the LORD is against those who do evil,  
to erase the remembrance of them from the earth.**

<sup>17</sup>The righteous cry, and the LORD hears them  
and delivers them from all their troubles.

<sup>18</sup>**The LORD is near to the brokenhearted  
and saves those whose spirits are crushed.**

<sup>19</sup>Many are the troubles of the righteous,  
but the LORD delivers them from every one.

<sup>20</sup>**God will keep safe all their bones;  
not one of them shall be broken.**

<sup>21</sup>Evil will bring death to the wicked  
and those who hate the righteous will be punished.

<sup>22</sup>**O LORD, you redeem the life of your servants,  
and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.**

## SECOND READING: Ephesians 6:10-20

*Like a general giving a rousing speech to troops before battle, this letter closes by calling on Christians to be equipped for spiritual warfare against evil. The full armor of God includes truth, righteousness, peace, faith, the gift of salvation, and the word of God inspired by the Spirit.*

A reading from Ephesians.

<sup>10</sup>Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. <sup>11</sup>Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup>For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup>Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. <sup>14</sup>Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. <sup>15</sup>As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup>With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup>Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

<sup>18</sup>Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. <sup>19</sup>Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup>for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW 188)



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## GOSPEL: John 6:56-69

*The “hard saying” that offends Jesus’ disciples is his claim that his followers must eat his flesh and drink his blood. The followers who return to their old lives know something about how odd this sounds. Simon Peter, on the other hand, knows something about the scarcity of living, gracious words. He asks the most important question: “To whom shall we go?”*

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said,] <sup>56</sup>“Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. <sup>57</sup>Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. <sup>58</sup>This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” <sup>59</sup>He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

<sup>0</sup>When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" <sup>61</sup>But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? <sup>62</sup>Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? <sup>63</sup>It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. <sup>64</sup>But among you there are some who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. <sup>65</sup>And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father."

<sup>66</sup>Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. <sup>67</sup>So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" <sup>68</sup>Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. <sup>69</sup>We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON (ELW p. 189)**

The assembly stands.

**HYMN OF THE DAY *You Are The Way* (ELW 758)**



1 You are the way; to you a - lone from sin and death we flee;  
2 You are the truth; your word a - lone true wis - dom can im - part;  
3 You are the life; the rend - ing tomb pro - claims your con - qu'ring arm;  
4 You are the way, the truth, the life; grant us that way to know,



all those who search for God, you find and by your grace set free.  
you on - ly can in - form the mind and pu - ri - fy the heart.  
and those who put their trust in you not death nor hell shall harm.  
that truth to keep, that life to win, whose joys e - ter - nal flow.

**APOSTLE'S 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.

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

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](http://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.

## Change My Heart, O God (ELW 801)

Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.  
Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.  
You are the pot - ter; I am the clay.  
Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

## 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: ourselves, 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.**

## LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 191)

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 (ELW p. 192)

The God of steadfastness and encouragement  
grant you to live in harmony with one another,  
in accordance with Christ Jesus.

**Amen.**

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,  
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The God of all grace ✠ bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

## SENDING SONG *O Jesus, I Have Promised* (ELW 810)



1 O Je - sus, I have prom - ised to serve you to the end;  
2 Oh, let me feel you near me; the world is ev - er near.  
3 Oh, let me hear you speak - ing in ac - cents clear and still  
4 O Je - sus, you have prom - ised to all who fol - low you



re - main for - ev - er near me, my mas - ter and my friend.  
I see the sights that daz - zle, the tempt - ing sounds I hear.  
a - bove the storms of pas - sion, the mur - murs of self - will.  
that where you are in glo - ry your ser - vant shall be too.



I shall not fear the bat - tle if you are by my side,  
My foes are ev - er near me, a - round me and with - in;  
Now speak to re - as - sure me, to has - ten or con - trol;  
And Je - sus, I have prom - ised to serve you to the end;



nor wan - der from the path - way if you will be my guide.  
but, Je - sus, then draw near - er to shield my soul from sin.  
now speak and make me lis - ten, O Guard - ian of my soul.  
oh, give me grace to fol - low, my mas - ter and my friend.

**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.*

OUR WORSHIP ASSISTANTS		
Ministers of:	Today	September 1
Music	Jill Barnhart	Jill Barnhart
Proclamation (Lector)	Wayne Frauenholtz	Dave Bahnsen
Technology	Paula Casper	Jill Taylor
Hospitality (Greeter)	Nancy Bruns	Anne & Jamie Fetzer
Worship (Altar Care)	Patsy Ernst & Paula Casper	Dave & Kami Poppen



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.wbbethanv.org](http://www.wbbethanv.org)

**FAITH FORMATION  
KICKOFF**  
**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4**  
**6:30 - 7:30 PM**

**Who: Parents and Youth  
(Grades 3-8)**

**Pizza will be provided.**

*Attention Singers*  
*Choir will begin September 4th.*

Bethany's choir could use more voices. If you love to sing, please join us Wednesday evenings from 6:15-7:00. Let me know. Thanks!  
Jill Barnhart (319)541-9738

**God's work. Our hands.**

September 8, 2024

*Community Meal*

**TONIGHT**  
**5-6:00 PM**

**All are welcome!**

Bethany Lutheran Church  
235 South 2nd St.



# 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 Oceti Sakowin 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.

## *Outdoor Worship and Fellowship*

September 15

9:30 AM

Please bring a lawn chair.  
Following worship, a meal will be provided.

*Celebration of God's work!*



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America

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