

Blessed are you

LUKE 6:22



February 16, 2025

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany
Bethany Lutheran Church (ELCA)

Introduction to the day

Blessings and curses abound on the sixth Sunday after Epiphany. We would do well to listen closely to whom the “blessed are” and the “woe tos” are directed and to find our place in the crowd among those who desire to touch Jesus. The risen Christ stands among us in the mystery of the holy supper with an invitation to live in him, and offers power to heal us all.

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 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 *Let Justis Flow Like Streams* (ELW 717)



1 Let jus - tice flow like streams of spar - kling wa - ter, pure,
2 Let righ - teous - ness roll on as oth - ers' cares we heed,
3 So may God's plumb line, straight, de - fine our mea - sure true,



en - a - bling growth, re - fresh - ing life, a - bun - dant, cleans - ing, sure.
an - ev - er - flow - ing stream of faith trans - lat - ed in - to deed.
and jus - tice, right, and peace per - vade this world our whole life through.

Text: Jane Parker Huber, b. 1926
Music: ST. THOMAS, Aaron Williams, 1731-1776
Text © 1984 Jane Parker Huber, admin. Westminster John Knox Press

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.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Living God, in Christ you make all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your glory, 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: Jeremiah 17:5-10

These verses compose a poem that is part of a larger collection of wisdom sayings that contrast two ways of life. Life with God brings blessing; the power and vitality of God is active in our life. Life without God brings a curse, the power of death.

A reading from Jeremiah.

⁵ Thus says the LORD:

Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals and make mere flesh their strength,
whose hearts turn away from the LORD.

⁶ They shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when relief comes.

They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness,
in an uninhabited salt land.

⁷ Blessed are those who trust in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD.

⁸ They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream.

It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green;
in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.

⁹ The heart is devious above all else; it is perverse— who can understand it?

¹⁰ I the LORD test the mind and search the heart,
to give to all according to their ways,
according to the fruit of their doings.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 1

¹ Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!

² **Their delight is in the law of the LORD,
and they meditate on God's teaching day and night.**

³ They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither;
everything they do shall prosper.

⁴ **It is not so with the wicked;
they are like chaff which the wind blows away.**

⁵ Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes,
nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

⁶ **For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked shall be destroyed.**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

For Paul, the resurrection of Christ is the basis for Christian hope. Because Christ has been raised, those who are in Christ know that they too will be raised to a new life beyond death.

A reading from First Corinthians.

¹² Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; ¹⁴ and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain. ¹⁵ We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised.

¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. ¹⁷ If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. ¹⁹ If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. ²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

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: Luke 6:17-26

After choosing his twelve apostles, Jesus teaches a crowd of followers about the nature and demands of discipleship. He begins his great sermon with surprising statements about who is truly blessed in the eyes of God.

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁷ Jesus came down with [the twelve] and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. ¹⁸ They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. ¹⁹ And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

²⁰ Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ “Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled.

“Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

²² “Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. ²³ Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

²⁴ “But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

²⁵ “Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry.

“Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶ “Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY *We Come to the Hungry Feast* (ELW 479)



1 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a word of peace.
2 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a world re - leased
3 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry that the hun - ger cease,



To hun - gry hearts un - sat - is - fied the love of God is
from hun - gry folk of ev - 'ry kind, the poor in bod - y,
and know - ing, though we eat our fill, the hun - ger will stay



not de - nied. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
poor in mind. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
with us; still we come, we come to the hun - gry feast.

Text: Ray Makeever, b. 1943
Music: HUNGRY FEAST, Ray Makeever
Text and music © 1982 Ray Makeever, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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" and the people of God sing "O Lord, Hear My Prayer" (ELW 751).



O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: when I call, an - swer me.
OR *The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: all my hope comes from God.*



O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: come and lis - ten to me.
The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: God, the well-spring of life.



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: 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.

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.

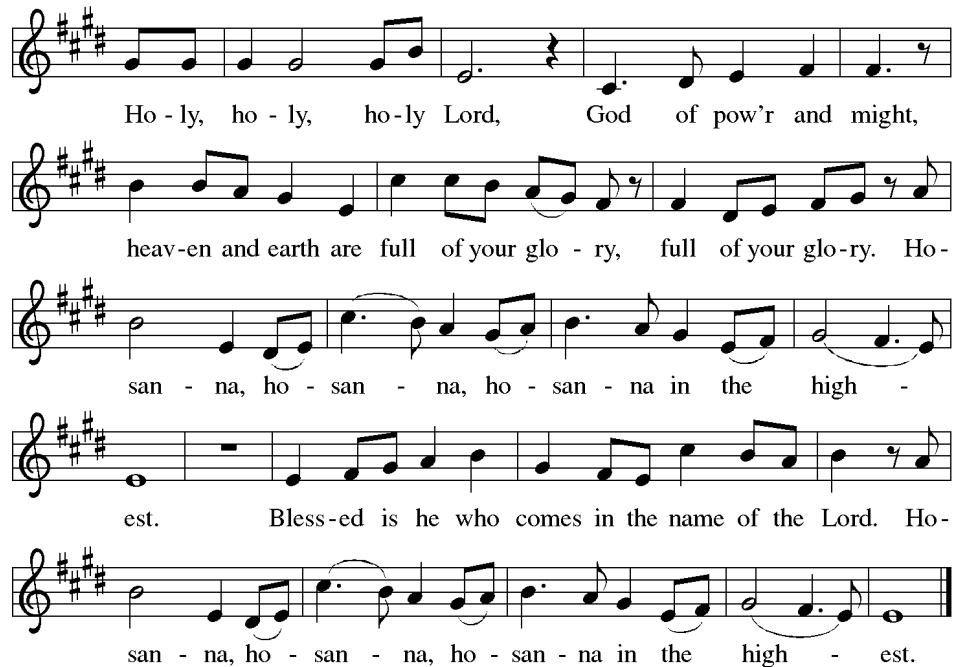
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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)

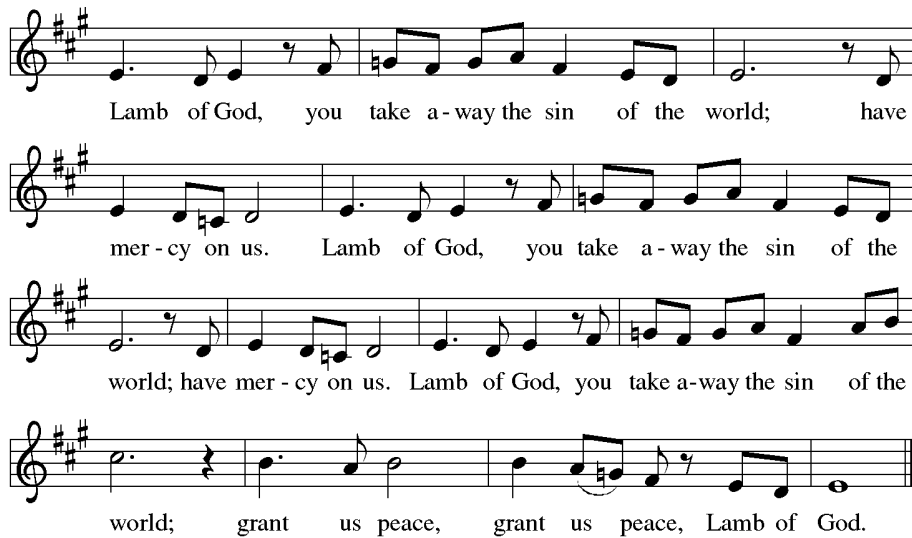
Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

The assembly is seated.

COMMUNION

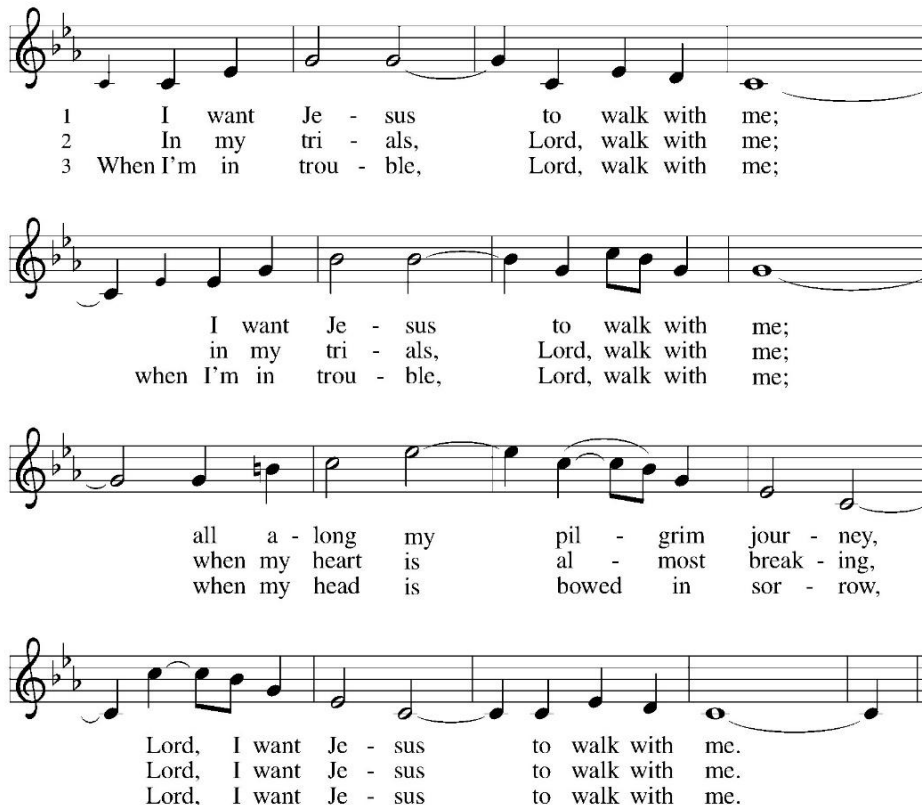
Communion today will be distributed in a continuous line. The cups in the center of the tray contain white grape juice. All other cups are wine. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request. All gathered who believe Jesus Christ is their Lord and Savior are invited to come to Holy Communion with repentant 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.

I Want Jesus to Walk With Me (ELW 325)



1 I want Je - sus to walk with me;
2 In my tri - als, Lord, walk with me;
3 When I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;


I want Je - sus to walk with me;
in my tri - als, Lord, walk with me;
when I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;

all a - long my pil - grim jour - ney,
when my heart is al - most break - ing,
when my head is bowed in sor - row,


Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.

Blest Are They (ELW 728)

Leader or All



1 Blest are they, the poor in spir - it; theirs is the
2 Blest are they, the low - ly ones; . . . they shall in -
3 Blest are they who show mer - cy; mer - cy
4 Blest are they who seek peace; . . they are the
5 Blest are you who suf - fer hate, . . . all . . . be -



king - dom of God. Blest are they,
her - it the earth. Blest are they, who
shall . . . be theirs. Blest are they, the
chil - dren of God. Blest are they, who
cause . . . of me. Re - joice, be glad,



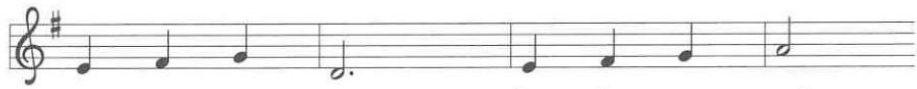
full of sor - row; they shall be con - soled.
hun - ger and thirst; they shall have their fill.
pure of heart; they shall see God.
suf - fer in faith; the glo - ry of God is theirs.
yours is the king - dom; shine for all to see.

Refrain

All



Re - joice and be glad!



Bless - ed are you, ho - ly are you!



Re - joice and be glad!



Yours is the king - dom of God!

Text: David Haas, b. 1957
Music: David Haas
Text and music © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc.

BLEST ARE THEY
Irregular

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.

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 *We Know That Christ Is Raised (ELW 449)*



1 We know that Christ is raised and dies no more.
 2 We share by wa - ter in his sav - ing death.
 3 The Fa - ther's splen - dor clothes the Son with life.
 4 A new cre - a - tion comes to life and grows



Em - braced by death, he broke its fear - ful hold,
 Re - born, we share with him an Eas - ter life,
 The Spir - it's fis - sion shakes the church of God.
 as Christ's new bod - y takes on flesh and blood.



and our de - spair he turned to blaz - ing joy.
 as liv - ing mem - bers of our Sav - ior Christ.
 Bap - tized, we live with God the Three in One.
 The u - ni - verse re - stored and whole will sing:



Hal - le - lu - jah!

Text: John B. Geyer, b. 1932
 Music: ENGELBERG, Charles V. Stanford, 1852-1924
 Text © John B. Geyer.

SENDING

Go in peace. Christ is with you!

Thanks be to God.

Please join us for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

OUR WORSHIP ASSISTANTS		
Ministers of:	Today	February 23
Music	Jill Barnhart	Jill Barnhart
Proclamation (Lector)	Pat Cassabaum	Al Beyer
Hospitality (Greeter)	Del & Sue Hughes	Howard & Terry Moss
Technology	Dale Swenson	Dave Poppen
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

SUPPORT THE MANY MINISTRIES

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH



1

OFFERING PLATE

Money can be placed in offering plate on Sunday morning or mailed to:
Bethany Lutheran Church Box 236, West Branch, IA 52358.

2

ON-LINE DONATIONS

<https://wbbethany.org>. Click on the blue "Give Now" button.



3

AUTOMATIC WITHDRAWAL

Sign up for the "Simply Giving" program for automatic withdrawals from your account. Contact blcsecretary@lcom.net

4

MOBILE APP

Download the new Vanco Mobile App from your smartphone app store. Select Bethany Lutheran Church, West Branch, IA and make your donation.



5

IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER

Tax-free donation directly from an IRA to Bethany Lutheran Church
This is a tax-free way to give your required minimum distributions from your IRA to charity.

Are you looking for ways to donate your Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) from your retirement accounts - consider an IRA Charitable Rollover

- Normally, when you take a distribution from a traditional IRA (not a Roth), you have to pay taxes on it because you didn't pay taxes on the money when you put it in the IRA.
- If you are 70 1/2 or older, you can make a charitable contribution from the IRA directly to a qualified charity (like a church) without having to treat it as a taxable distribution. The effect of this is to lower your adjusted gross distribution for tax purposes by the amount of the charitable contribution.
- Because you do not have to claim the amt of the donation as taxable income, you also do not claim the deduction on schedule A. This means you do not need to itemize your deductions in order to utilize this option.
- This option is particularly attractive if you are 72 and are required to make a minimum distribution. You can avoid taxes on it by donating it to a charity that you would otherwise donate directly to and avoid the taxes.

To make a donation through your traditional IRA, assuming you are at least 70 1/2, you notify your IRA trustee and he or she will process the direct transfer to the charity. The IRA sends the check directly to the charity. The charity must provide a receipt stating that the donor received no goods or services in return for it.

If you are interested in doing this, talk to your IRA custodian about how to do it and be sure to leave sufficient time for the funds to reach the charity in the year you want them to.

YOU'RE INVITED!

HIGH SCHOOL NIGHT

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16
6:00-7:00 PM

Food, Faith, Fellowship, Fun

RSVP APPRECIATED



Faith Forward FAMILY NIGHT

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 26
6-7:30 PM

Parents, Grandparents,
Children & Youth,
Adult Mentors

Meal Provided

Faith Activities

Come and go as you like!

RSVP online or at the
Faith Forward table





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.

OUR mission

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



WWW.WBBETHANY.ORG

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