A young child with dark hair, wearing a white ribbed sweater, is shown from the chest up. They are holding a clear glass jar with a gold lid, which is filled with various coins. The child's hands are resting on the jar, and their face is partially visible, looking slightly to the right. The background is a soft, out-of-focus white fabric.

Whoever is  
faithful in a very  
little is faithful  
also in much

LUKE 16:10

**September 21, 2025**

15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

Bethany Lutheran Church (ELCA)

**Introduction to the day**

As we are invited today to consider what it means to be managers (rather than owners) of all that we have, it is crucial to recognize that we are bought with a price. “Christ Jesus, himself human, . . . gave himself a ransom for all.” Apart from the generosity of God we have nothing—we are nothing. By God’s gracious favor we have everything we need.

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 and responds with the words printed in bold.

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

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 HYMN** *God, We Gather as Your People (ACS 1038)* See next page.



1 God, we gath - er as your peo - ple to raise our song a -  
 2 Oh, we sing for all the chil - dren, that one day they be  
 3 Oh, we pray for all the young lives cut short by fear and  
 4 God, we're work - ing for the fu - ture when chil - dren far and



bove, and we dare to claim the prom - ise of your love.  
 free; and we sing for gen - er - a - tions yet to be,  
 shame, so a - fraid of who they are and whom they love.  
 wide can . . . live their lives with dig - ni - ty and pride.



Though the day may not yet be here, we  
 that they nev - er have a rea - son to  
 May the mes - sage now be ban - ished that your  
 As they grow in strength and stat - ure, may they



trust it soon will be, when your chil - dren will be free.  
 doubt that they are blest. May they, in your love, find rest.  
 love is for the few; may their faith in you re - new.  
 join us hand in hand, as a - gainst all hate we stand.



*Refrain*

Oh, may our hearts and minds be o - pened, fling the church doors o - pen



wide. May there be room e - nough for ev - 'ry - one in - side.



For in God there is a wel - come, in God we all be -



long. May that wel - come be our song.

**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.

*A brief silence is kept before the prayer.*

God among us, we gather in the name of your Son to learn love for one another. Keep our feet from evil paths. Turn our minds to your wisdom and our hearts to the grace revealed in 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: Amos 8:4-7

*Amos was called by God to prophesy in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Peace and prosperity in Israel led to corrupt business practices and oppression of the poor. The prophet declares that God will not tolerate such a situation.*

A reading from Amos.

- <sup>4</sup> Hear this, you who trample on the needy,  
and bring to ruin the poor of the land,  
<sup>5</sup> saying, “When will the new moon be over  
so that we may sell grain,  
and the Sabbath,  
so that we may offer wheat for sale?  
We will make the ephah smaller and the shekel heavier  
and practice deceit with false balances,  
<sup>6</sup> buying the poor for silver  
and the needy for a pair of sandals  
and selling the sweepings of the wheat.”  
<sup>7</sup> The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob:  
Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM 113

- <sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! Give praise, you servants of the LORD;  
praise the name of the LORD.  
<sup>2</sup> **Let the name of the LORD be blessed,  
from this time forth for evermore.**  
<sup>3</sup> From the rising of the sun to its going down  
let the name of the LORD be praised.  
<sup>4</sup> **The LORD is high above all nations;  
God’s glory above the heavens.**  
<sup>5</sup> Who is like the LORD our God,  
who sits enthroned on high,  
<sup>6</sup> **but stoops to behold  
the heavens and the earth?**  
<sup>7</sup> The LORD takes up the weak out of the dust  
and lifts up the poor from the ashes,  
<sup>8</sup> **enthroning them with the rulers,  
with the rulers of the people.**  
<sup>9</sup> The LORD makes the woman of a childless house  
to be a joyful mother of children. Hallelujah!

### SECOND READING: 1 Timothy 2:1-7

*The pastoral epistles offer insight into how early Christians understood many practical matters, such as church administration and worship. The church’s focused prayer for others is an expression of the single-minded passion God has toward us in Jesus.*

A reading from First Timothy.

- <sup>1</sup> First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, <sup>2</sup> for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and

dignity. <sup>3</sup> This is right and acceptable before God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup> For

there is one God;

there is also one mediator between God and humankind,

Christ Jesus, himself human,

<sup>6</sup> who gave himself a ransom for all

—this was attested at the right time. <sup>7</sup> For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth; I am not lying), a teacher of the gentiles in faith and truth.

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 READING: Luke 16:1-13**

*Jesus tells the curious story of a dishonest manager who cheats his employer and then is commended by him for having acted so shrewdly. Jesus wonders why his own followers are less creative and diligent in their stewardship given that they are managers of a far more valuable household.*

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. <sup>2</sup> So he summoned him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.’ <sup>3</sup> Then the manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. <sup>4</sup> I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.’ <sup>5</sup> So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ <sup>6</sup> He answered, ‘A hundred jugs of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’ <sup>7</sup> Then he asked another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He replied, ‘A hundred containers of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and make it eighty.’ <sup>8</sup> And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. <sup>9</sup> And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

<sup>10</sup> “Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. <sup>11</sup> If, then, you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? <sup>12</sup> And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? <sup>13</sup> No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

The assembly is seated.

**SERMON**

The assembly stands.

## HYMN OF THE DAY *Commonwealth Is God's Commandment (ACS 1036)*



1 Com-mon-wealth is God's com-mand-ment; com-mon goods are meant to share.  
2 Shar-ing lav-ish gifts and bless-ings, love that not one mite with-holds,  
3 Gen-ders, rac-es, tribes, and na-tions, hear the Ho-ly One who calls,



Ta-bles set and doors wide o-pen wel-come an-gels un-a-ware.  
stretch out arms to friends and strang-ers: God has sheep of man-y folds.  
bid-ding all to work to-geth-er, bridg-ing lives and breach-ing walls.



Plead for the peace of all cre-a-tion. Pray for a place where grace is found.



*Shan-ti, pax, sha-lom, mas-la-ha:* com-mon good is ho-ly ground.

## 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

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 responds, "Hear 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

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

## 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.

## 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



bles-sing. 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

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.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

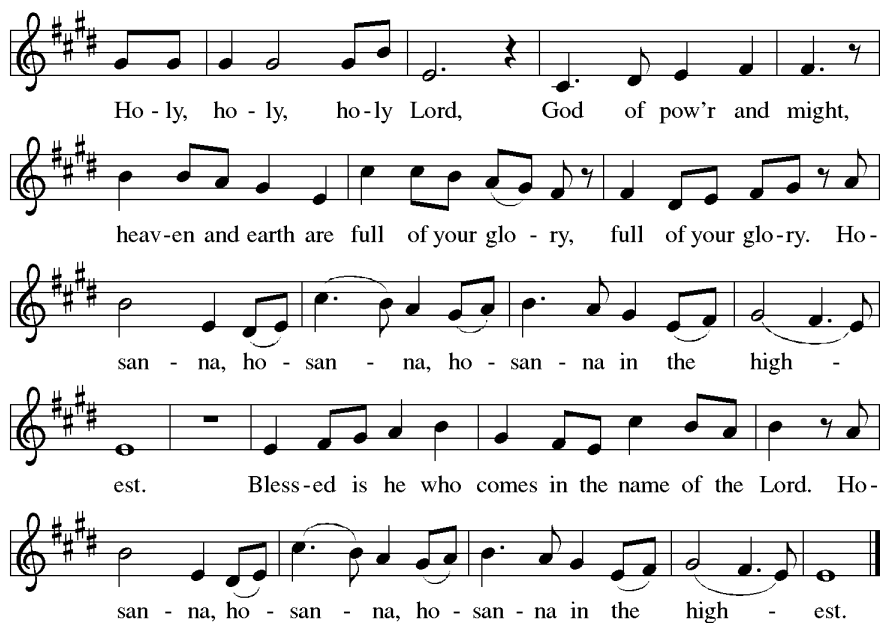
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## PREFACE

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:



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

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.**

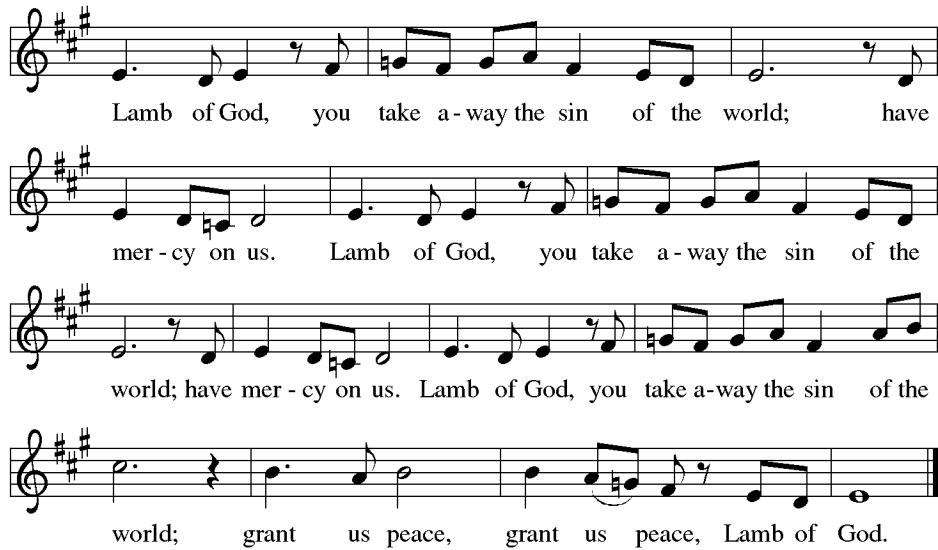
**For thine is the kingdom,  
 and the power, and the glory,  
 forever and ever. Amen.**

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



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.

## Son of God, Eternal Savior (ELW 655)



- 1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,
- 2 As you, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, so may we for oth - ers live.
- 3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and Prince of peace;
- 4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,



Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race,  
Free - ly have your gifts been grant-ed; free - ly may your ser - vants give.  
hush the storm of strife and pas-sion, bid its cru-el dis - cords cease.  
Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race:



you our head, who, throned in glo - ry, for your own will ev - er plead:  
Yours the gold and yours the sil-ver, yours the wealth of land and sea;  
By your pa - tient years of toil-ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,  
by your pray-ing, by your will-ing that your peo - ple should be one,



fill us with your love and pit - y, heal our wrong, and help our need.  
we but stew-ards of your boun-ty held in sol - emn trust will be.  
quench our fe-vered thirst of plea-sure, stem our self - ish greed of gain.  
grant, oh, grant our hope's fru - i - tion: here on earth your will be done.

## Here Is Bread (ELW 483)

1 Here is bread, here is wine, Christ is with us, he is with us.  
2 Here is grace, here is peace, Christ is with us, he is with us.  
3 Here we are, joined in one, Christ is with us, he is with us.

Break the bread, taste the wine, Christ is with us here.  
Know his grace, find his peace, feast on Je - sus here.  
We'll pro - claim till he comes Je - sus cru - ci - fied.

The assembly stands.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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 HYMN *Be Thou My Vision* (ELW 793)

1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;  
2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;  
3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,  
4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,

naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.  
thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:  
may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!

thou my best thought both by day and by night,  
Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,  
thou and thou on - ly, the first in my heart,  
Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.  
raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.  
great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.  
still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

## BLESSING

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

**Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

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

OUR MINISTRY ASSISTANTS		
Ministers of:	Today	September 28th
Music	Jill Barnhart	Jill Barnhart
Proclamation (Lector)	Bruce Jeffries	Beth Kaufman
Hospitality (Greeter)	Stacy Beyer	Nancy Bruns
Technology	Jill Taylor	Dale Swenson
Worship (Altar Care)	Del & Sue Hughes	Del & Sue Hughes
Food & Fellowship	Phil & Diane Hougen	Please sign up!

**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.

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