

**May 3, 2026**

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Bethany Lutheran Church (ELCA)

**Introduction to the day**

As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, today's gospel includes Jesus' promise that he goes to prepare a place for his followers in his Father's house. Our baptism commissions us to share Jesus' mission in the world. As 1 Peter reminds us, we are a holy people, called to proclaim the one who called us out of darkness into light. In words and deeds, we bear witness to the risen Christ—our way, our truth, our life.

This worship is being streamed live via Facebook and will be posted to our website and YouTube page. 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**

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 / Know That My Redeemer Lives (ELW 619)**



1 I know that my Re - deem - er lives! What com - fort  
2 He lives tri - um - phant from the grave; he lives e -  
3 He lives to grant me rich sup - ply; he lives to  
4 He lives to si - lence all my fears; he lives to



this sweet sen - tence gives! He lives, he lives, who  
ter - nal - ly to save; he lives ex - alt - ed,  
guide me with his eye; he lives to com - fort  
wipe a - way my tears; he lives to calm my



once was dead; he lives, my ev - er - liv - ing head!  
throned a - bove; he lives to rule his church in love.  
me when faint; he lives to hear my soul's com - plaint.  
trou - bled heart; he lives all bless - ings to im - part.

## **EASTER CALL TO WORSHIP**

We gather to celebrate the Easter promise: Christ is risen.

**He is risen indeed.**

Sin and death have no power over us.

**Alleluia!**

Let us come and worship Him.

**Let us worship Him in spirit and in truth.**

Christ is risen.

**He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

## **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.

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

The assembly is seated.

## **WORD**

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

### **FIRST READING: Acts 7:55-60**

*Stephen was one of the seven men chosen by the apostles to serve tables so that the apostles could be free to serve the word (Acts 6:1-6). Stephen does more than distribute food, however. For his preaching of God's word, he becomes the first martyr of the faith.*

A reading from Acts.

<sup>55</sup> Filled with the Holy Spirit, Stephen gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup> "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" <sup>57</sup> But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. <sup>58</sup> Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him, and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. <sup>59</sup> While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." <sup>60</sup> Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **PSALM 31:1-5, 15-16**

<sup>1</sup> In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame;  
deliver me in your righteousness.

<sup>2</sup> **Incline your ear to me;  
make haste to deliver me.**

<sup>3</sup> Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag and my stronghold;  
for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.

<sup>4</sup> **Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me,  
for you are my tower of strength.**

<sup>5</sup> Into your hands I commend my spirit,  
for you have redeemed me, O LORD, God of truth.

<sup>15</sup> **My times are in your hand;  
rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.**

<sup>16</sup> Let your face shine upon your servant;  
save me in your steadfast love.”

**SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2:2-10**

*Christ is the cornerstone of God’s saving work and the foundation of our lives. We are God’s chosen, holy people who continuously celebrate and declare the mercy of God we experience through Jesus Christ.*

A reading from First Peter.

<sup>2</sup> Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation <sup>3</sup> if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

<sup>4</sup> Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and <sup>5</sup> like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. <sup>6</sup> For it stands in scripture:

“See, I am laying in Zion a stone,  
a cornerstone chosen and precious,  
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

<sup>7</sup> This honor, then, is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

“The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the very head of the corner,” <sup>8</sup> and  
“A stone that makes them stumble  
and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

<sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people,  
but now you are God’s people;  
once you had not received mercy,  
but now you have received mercy.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

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 READING: John 14:1-14**

*On the night that he is to be arrested, Jesus shares final words with his disciples. As the one through whom God is known, he promises to go before them and act on their behalf.*

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup> “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. <sup>4</sup> And you know the way to the place where I am going.” <sup>5</sup> Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. <sup>7</sup> If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

<sup>8</sup> Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” <sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? <sup>10</sup> Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. <sup>11</sup> Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, but if you do not, then believe because of the works themselves. <sup>12</sup> Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. <sup>13</sup> I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup> If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

The assembly is seated.

**SERMON**

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.

**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

Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

*Each petition ends with, "Merciful God." The people of God respond, "Receive our prayer."*

God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

**Amen.**

### PEACE

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.*

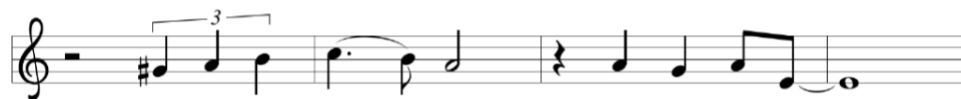
### OFFERTORY HYMN *Change My Heart, O God* (ELW 801)



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

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.**

## DIALOGUE

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,

for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,

the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin;

who in dying has destroyed death,

and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection,

with earth and sea and all their creatures,

and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim,

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 in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those

who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours,

now and forever. Amen.

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

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 SONGS



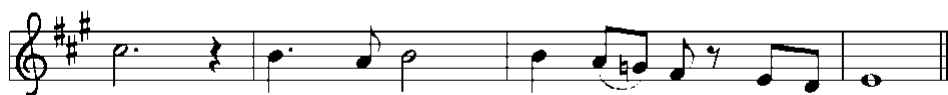
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



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 Received the Living God (ELW 477)***

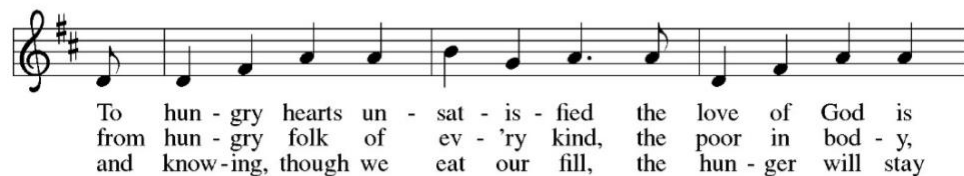
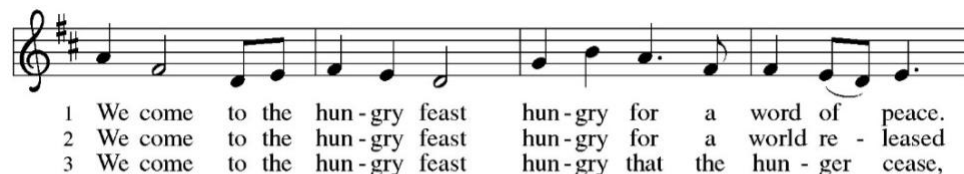


- 1 Je - sus said: I am the bread, knead - ed long to give you life;
- 2 Je - sus said: I am the way, and my Fa - ther longs for you;
- 3 Je - sus said: I am the truth; come and fol - low close to me.
- 4 Je - sus said: I am the life, far from whom no thing can grow,



you who will par - take of me need not ev - er fear to die.  
so I come to bring you home to be one with us a - new.  
You will know me in your heart, and my word shall make you free.  
but re - ceive this liv - ing bread, and my Spir - it you shall know.

## ***We Come to the Hungry Feast (ELW 479)***



The assembly stands.

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection, that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

**Amen.**

### **BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

The Lord look upon you with favor

and give you ☩ peace. **Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN *Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen* (ELW 377)



1 Al - le - lu - ia! Je - sus is ris - en!  
2 Walk - ing the way, Christ in the cen - ter  
3 Je - sus the vine, we are the branch - es;  
4 Weep - ing, be gone; sor - row, be si - lent:  
5 Cit - y of God, Eas - ter for - ev - er,



Trum - pets re - sound - ing in glo - ri - ous light!  
tell - ing the sto - ry to o - pen our eyes;  
life in the Spir - it the fruit of the tree;  
death put a - sun - der, and Eas - ter is bright.  
gold - en Je - ru - sa - lem, Je - sus the Lamb,



Splen - dor, the Lamb, heav - en for - ev - er!  
break - ing our bread, giv - ing us glo - ry:  
heav - en to earth, Christ to the peo - ple,  
Cher - u - bim sing: O grave, be o - pen!  
riv - er of life, saints and arch - an - gels,



Oh, what a mir - a - cle God has in sight!  
Je - sus our bless - ing, our con - stant sur - prise.  
gift of the fu - ture now flow - ing to me.  
Clothe us in won - der, a - dorn us in light.  
sing with cre - a - tion to God the I AM!



*Refrain*  
Je - sus is ris - en and we shall a - rise.



Give God the glo - ry! Al - le - lu - ia!

### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

### POSTLUDE

*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)

## 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.*



### OUR MINISTRY ASSISTANTS

Ministers of:	Today	May 10
Music	Jill Barnhart	Jill Barnhart
Proclamation (Lector)	Deb Anderson	Bruce Jeffries
Hospitality (Greeter)	Kent & Beth Kaufman	Howard & Terry Moss
Technology	Dale Swenson	Dave Poppen
Worship (Altar Care)	Del & Sue Hughes	Del & Sue Hughes
Food & Fellowship	Diane & Phil Hougen	Please sign up!

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