



*Everything is ready;
come to the
wedding banquet*

MATTHEW 22:4

October 11, 2026

20th Sunday after Pentecost



Bethany Lutheran Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Introduction to the day

In today's gospel reading, Jesus tells a vineyard parable, which serves as an image of Israel, the prophets' mission, and Christ's death. For Christians, the vineyard also speaks of God's love poured out in the blood of Christ, given to us for the forgiveness of sin. Grafted onto Christ the vine at baptism, we are nourished with wine and bread so that we may share Christ's sufferings and know the power of his resurrection.

This worship is being streamed live via Facebook and posted to our YouTube channel.
The camera captures anyone in the first few pews of our worship space and beyond extending to the altar.

PRELUDE

LIGHTING OF CANDLES / CHOIR “Seek Ye First”

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

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 HYMN *Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies* (ELW 553)



1 Christ, whose glo - ry fills the skies, Christ, the true and on - ly light,
2 Dark and cheer-less is the morn un - ac - com - pa - nied by thee;
3 Vis - it then this soul of mine, pierce the gloom of sin and grief;



Sun of righ-teous-ness, a - rise, tri - umph o'er the shades of night;
joy-less is the day's re - turn, till thy mer-cy's beams I see,
fill me, ra - dian - cy di - vine, scat - ter all my un - be - lief;



Day-spring from on high, be near; Day-star, in my heart ap - pear.
till they in - ward light im - part, glad my eyes, and warm my heart.
more and more thy - self dis - play, shin - ing to the per - fect day.

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.

KYRIE



Ky-ri-e e-lei-son, on our world and on our way.

Ky-ri-e e-lei-son, ev-'ry day.

1 For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the
2 That we may live out your im-passioned re-sponse to the
3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . for
4 For your Spir-it to guide; that you cen-ter our lives in the

u - ni - ty of all; for
hun - gry and the poor; that
friends and fam - i - ly; for
wa - ter and the word; that you

this ho - ly house, for all who wor-ship and praise,
we may live out truth and jus - tice and grace,
life and for love, for our work and our play,
nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod - y and blood,

let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Lord of the feast, you have prepared a table before all peoples and poured out your life with abundance. Call us again to your banquet. Strengthen us by what is honorable, just, and pure, and transform us into a people of righteousness and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

CHOIR ANTHEM “Wonderful Light!”

WORD

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

FIRST READING: Isaiah 25:1-9

After a hymn of praise acknowledging God as a shelter for the poor, the prophet portrays a wonderful victory banquet at which death—which in ancient Canaan was depicted as a monster swallowing up everyone—will be swallowed up forever. The prophet urges celebration of this victory of salvation.

A reading from Isaiah.

¹ O LORD, you are my God;
 I will exalt you; I will praise your name,
 for you have done wonderful things,
 plans formed of old, faithful and sure.

² For you have made the city a heap,
 the fortified city a ruin;
 the palace of foreigners is a city no more;
 it will never be rebuilt.

³ Therefore strong peoples will glorify you;
 cities of ruthless nations will fear you.

⁴ For you have been a refuge to the poor,
 a refuge to the needy in their distress,
 a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat.
 When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm,
⁵ the noise of foreigners like heat in a dry place,
 you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds;
 the song of the ruthless was stilled.

⁶ On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples
 a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,
 of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear.

⁷ And he will destroy on this mountain
 the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
 the covering that is spread over all nations;
⁸ he will swallow up death forever.

Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces,
 and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,
 for the LORD has spoken.

⁹ It will be said on that day,
 “See, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us.
 This is the LORD for whom we have waited;
 let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 23

¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

² **The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.**

³ You restore my soul, O LORD, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴ **Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;
 for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
 you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶ **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
 and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

SECOND READING: Philippians 4:1-9

Though writing from prison and facing an uncertain future, Paul calls on the Philippians to rejoice and give thanks to God no matter what the circumstance. God's peace is with us and binds together our hearts and minds in Jesus Christ, especially when things around us do not seem peaceful.

A reading from Philippians.

¹ My brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

² I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my coworkers, whose names are in the book of life.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

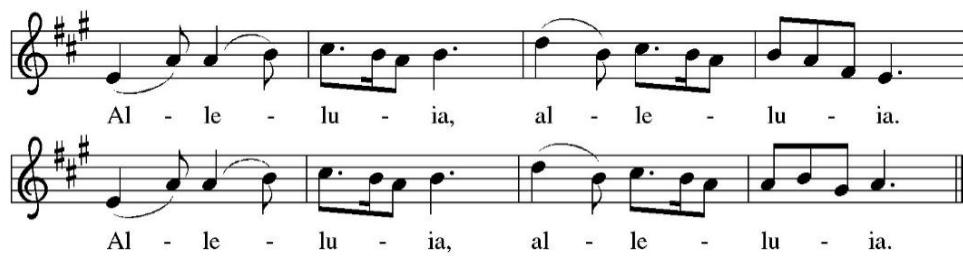
⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ As for the things that you have learned and received and heard and noticed in me, do them, and the God of peace will be with you.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Celtic Alleluia (ELW 174)



GOSPEL READING: Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus tells a parable indicating that the blessings of God's kingdom are available to all, but the invitation is not to be taken lightly.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: ² “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. ³ He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. ⁴ Again he sent other slaves, saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.’ ⁵ But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶ while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. ⁷ The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. ⁸ Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹ Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’ ¹⁰ Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad, so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

¹¹ “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, ¹² and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY *As We Gather at Your Table* (ELW 522)



1 As we gath-er at your ta-ble, as we lis-ten to your word,
2 Turn our wor-ship in-to wit-ness in the sac-ra-ment of life;
3 Gra-cious Spir-it, help us sum-mon oth-er guests to share that feast



help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.
where tri-um-phant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.



Nour-ish us with sa-cred sto-ry till we claim it as our own;
Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for-give as you for-gave;
There no more will en-vy blind us nor will pride our peace de-stroy,



teach us through this ho-ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic-t'ry known.
may we still be-hold your im-age in the world you died to save.
as we join with saints and an-gels to re-peat the sound-ing joy.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Seeking the Spirit of God who makes all things new, we pray for the church and the world.

Each petition ends, "Hear us, O God." The assembly then sings, "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying" (ELW 752).



Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, Lord, send your Spir-it in this place;



Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

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.

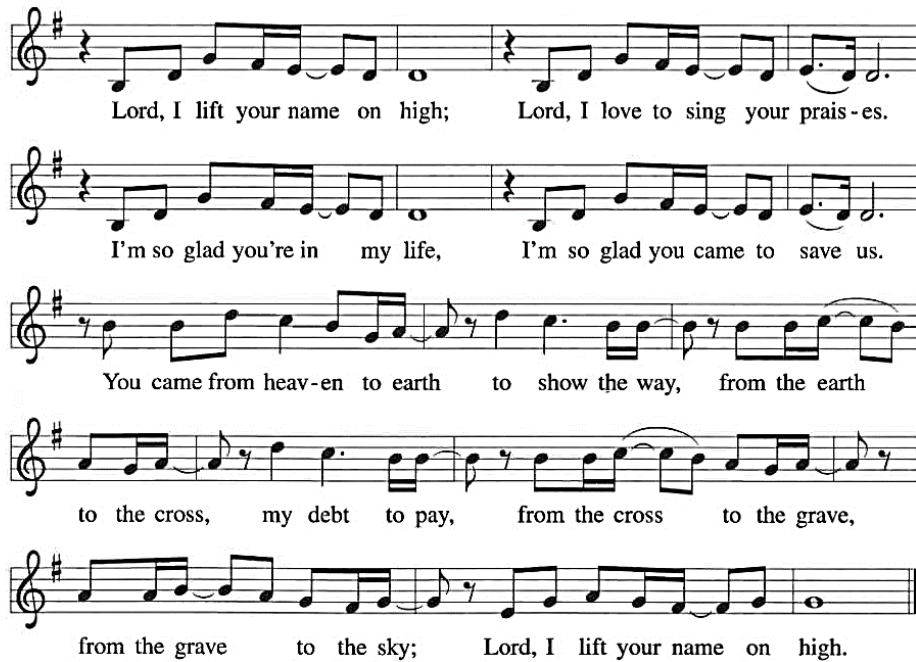
And also with you.

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). Thank you! After the offering is gathered, the people of God stand and sing the hymn on the next page, as the gifts are brought forward.

OFFERTORY HYMN *Lord, I Lift Your Name on High* (ELW 857)



Lord, I lift your name on high; Lord, I love to sing your prais-es.

I'm so glad you're in my life, I'm so glad you came to save us.

You came from heav-en to earth to show the way, from the earth

to the cross, my debt to pay, from the cross to the grave,

from the grave to the sky; Lord, I lift your name on high.

OFFERING PRAYER

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.

The assembly is seated.

THANKSGIVING FOR STAFF

A reading from 1 Corinthians 15:57-58 (NIV):

Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

For your work of faith, labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ,

We rejoice and give thanks to God for you.

For the variety of gifts the Spirit has equipped each of you with that help us glorify and worship God, be a place of welcome for all people, and proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ,

We rejoice and give thanks to God for you.

For the joy you give and the light of Christ that shines through each of you,

We rejoice and give thanks to God for you.

For the blessing and gift you are to our community of faith,

We rejoice and give thanks to God for all of you.

Let us pray.

Gracious God, as you have called workers to varied tasks in the world and in your church, so have you called these servants to ministries at Bethany. Grant them joy and a spirit of bold trust, that their work may stir up each of us to a life of fruitful service, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

May the Lord bless your work.

May the Lord strengthen you for service.

May the steadfast love of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

The assembly stands.

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.**

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.

SENDING HYMN *I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy*



1 I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy,
2 I've got the peace that pass - es un - der - stand - ing,
3 I've got the love of Je - sus, love of Je - sus,



down in my heart, down in my heart, down in my heart;
down in my heart, down in my heart, down in my heart;
down in my heart, down in my heart, down in my heart;



I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy,
I've got the peace that pass - es un - der - stand - ing,
I've got the love of Je - sus, love of Je - sus,



down in my heart, down in my heart to stay.
down in my heart, down in my heart to stay.
down in my heart, down in my heart to stay.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you!

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

OUR MINISTRY ASSISTANTS

Ministers of:	Today	October 18
Music	Jill Barnhart	Jill Barnhart
Proclamation (Lector)	Pat Cassabaum	Paula Casper
Hospitality (Greeter)	Howard & Terry Moss	Dave & Kami Poppen
Technology	Jill Taylor	Dale Swenson
Worship (Altar Care)	Dave & Kami Poppen	Dave & Kami Poppen
Food & Fellowship	Heidi Christensen	Opportunity to assist!

Please join us for the best fish ever! Sunday October 25th at 5pm.



Land Acknowledgement

Bethany Lutheran is located on 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 our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

Faith Forward Text Ministry

Twice each month, beginning soon, you will receive a short text with a simple practice you can share together as a family, with grandchildren, or individually.

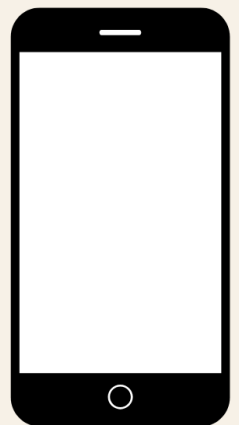
Short. Simple. Just small moments that help faith grow in Christ.

Sign up today! Use the QR Code.

Or use this link: <https://tinyurl.com/rs8r7kv>



You are loved!



ff Faith Forward
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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

Scan QR code with your phone or visit our website
<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.

Tuesday Morning Prayer Gathering

10:00 AM

Gather in the Sanctuary



All are welcome to attend. Come as you are. You can offer a prayer or say nothing and simply be present.



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