BETHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

You have a place here!

"Joyfully we profess our faith through God's unconditional love.
Here and now God dwells in all of our lives,
bears our sins on the cross, and forgives us all."

CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

9:00 am Sunday, November 22, 2026

Pastor David Johnson



TODAYS REFLECTION

On this final Sunday of the church year our gospel is Jesus' great story of judgment. In the end, the faithful are those who served Christ by ministering to those who are poor, hungry, naked, sick, or estranged. In the first reading God is the shepherd who seeks the lost, weak, and injured and feeds them with justice. We gather this day to celebrate the reign of Christ and his victory over death, yet we await the consummation of all things yet to come. Acknowledging Christ as our merciful ruler, we go forth that his reign may be known in our loving words and deeds.

All baptized and confessing believers are welcome to receive Holy Communion.

THE GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

We hope that your worship experience is spiritually fulfilling and your day begins with our Lord's gifts of peace and joy

▼ ***Prelude Reflections for Meditation***

▼ ***Welcome Greeting—Prayers and Praises***

▲ ***Opening Hymn***

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" page 9

▲ ***Confession & Forgiveness***

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
our dwelling place for all generations,
whose compassion never slumbers.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God
and of one another.

Silence for reflection.

Holy God,
we confess that we have trusted in our preparation instead of your invitation.
We prioritize our piety over care for your beloved.
We trust the voice of our shame and fear,
which keeps us from entering fully
into relationship with you and others.
We are not awake to the coming of your reign.
Rouse us and rescue us,
that we may enter into your joy.
Amen.

Inherit the riches of God's grace.
☩ Jesus, the good shepherd, feeds you with his mercy.
You are forgiven.
Blessed are you.
Amen.

▲ ***Prayer of the Day***

O God of power and might, **your Son shows us the way of service, and in him we inherit the riches of your grace. Give us the wisdom to know what is right and the**

strength to serve the world you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

THE WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song

▼ *God's Word from the Scriptures (NRSVUE)*

The First Reading is from Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

For thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep and will sort them out. As shepherds sort out their flocks when they are among scattered sheep, so I will sort out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them into their own land, and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strays, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you pushed with flank and shoulder and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged, and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them; he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I the Lord have spoken.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

▼ *God's Word from the Psalms (NRSVUE)*

Psalm 95:1-7a

O come, let us sing to the Lord; **let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!**
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; **let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!**
For the Lord is a great God **and a great King above all gods.**
In his hand are the depths of the earth; **the heights of the mountains are his also.**
The sea is his, for he made it, **and the dry land, which his hands have formed.**
O come, let us worship and bow down; **let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!**
For he is our God, **and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.**
O that today you would listen to his voice!

▼ ***God's Word from the Scriptures (NRSVUE)***

The Second Reading is from Ephesians 1:15-23

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may perceive what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

▼ ***Children's Sermon***

▲ ***God's Word from the Gospel (NRSVUE)***

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 25:31-46

Glory to you, O Lord.

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You who are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and

you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

▼ ***Sermon—God's Word Applied to Life***

▼ ***Hymn of the Day***

"I Want Jesus to Walk With Me" page 10

▲ **The Apostles' Creed**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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 the Church***

United with the great cloud of witnesses, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Prepare your people for your reign to come among us. Where the church is wary, make us bold; where we are complacent, stir us to action; where we are anxious, assure us of your never-ending care. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All the heights, depths, and expanses of the earth belong to you. Deliver every corner of your creation from disaster. Restore lands ravaged by floods, fires, drought, or contamination. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gather all the nations at your side and teach them the ways of your kingdom of wholeness and abundant life. Empower judges, juries, and legal advocates to create and uphold pathways toward transformative justice. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bind up the wounds of all your people. Give courage to all who experience uncertainty, guide all people facing difficult decisions, and lift the spirits of any who are in need (*especially those we name before you now*). God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Accompany communities struggling with conflict. Help us to listen deeply to one another, that we might know one another more fully and release any hurt or anger. Create ways of healing and reconciliation among us. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Fill us with the spirit of wisdom and perseverance that you grant to all the saints, and bring us, at the last, into the hope of your promised new day. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your steadfast love, faithful God, we entrust all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus, your beloved. **Amen.**

▲ ***Sharing of the Peace***

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.
Greet each other with a sign of Christ's peace.

THE MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

▼ ***Offering and Presentation of the Gifts***

Mission Designation October-December - **Adopt-a-Family/Senior**

▼ ***Offering Prayer***

Eternal God,
our time, talents, and treasures are gifts from you.
Receive what we offer,
and all that you entrust to us,
until hungry no more, all the world is fed,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

▼ ***The Great Thanksgiving and 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, 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.

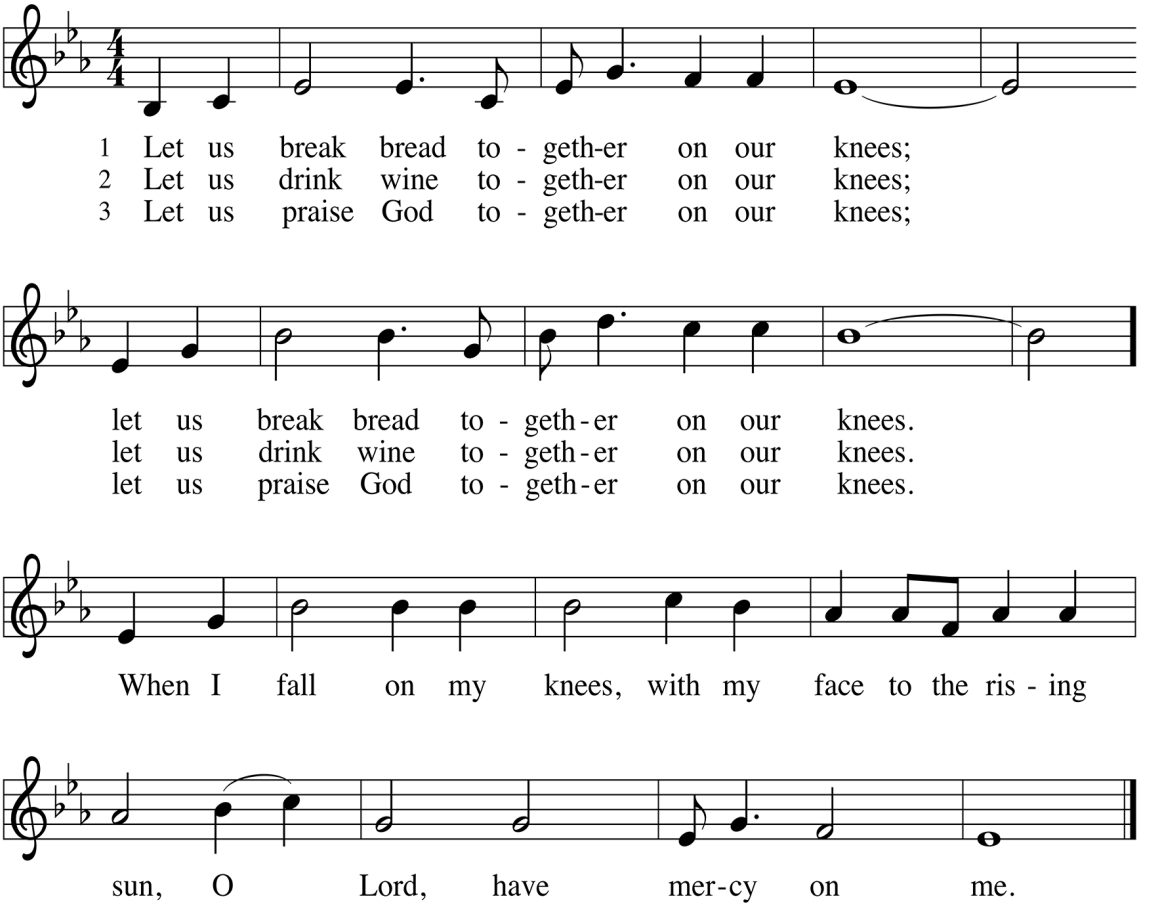
▼ ***The Lord's Prayer***

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 and Distribution of Communion***

In bread and cup the reign of Christ is breaking in.
Come, receive what Christ has prepared.

Let Us Break Bread Together



Text: African American spiritual
Music: BREAK BREAD TOGETHER, African American spiritual

▼ ***Post Communion Blessing***

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace until He comes again. In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

▼ ***Post Communion Prayer***

Holy God,
we have received your never-ending mercy in this meal.
You continuously seek the lost,
bind the injured,
and feed your people abundantly.
Now send us out,
awake to your presence,
now and forever.
Amen.

THE SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

▼ ***Closing Hymn***

"Precious Lord, Take My Hand" page 11

▼ ***Announcements***

Anyone is welcome to make announcements at this time

▲ ***Blessing and Dismissal***

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.
In the name of the Father and the † Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Go in peace. Encourage one another.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God



Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: EIN FESTE BURG, Martin Luther
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me



Text: African American spiritual
Music: SOJOURNER, African American spiritual

Precious Lord, Take My Hand



Text: Thomas A. Dorsey, 1899-1993
Tune: PRECIOUS LORD, 66 9 D; George N. Allen; arr. by Kelly Dobbs Mickus, b.1966
© 1938, Unichappell Music, Inc.

Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church
130 O'Dill Drive, Norway, Michigan 49870 www.norwaybethany.org
OFFICE PHONE 906-563-8472 EMAIL bethanyoffice130@gmailcom
Pastor Dave Johnson
PHONE/TEXT 651-769-3365 EMAIL ftp565@yahoo.com

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are available following these easy steps from our secure Website or Facebook Page

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MORE SPECIAL WAYS TO GIVE THROUGH YOUR TIME AND TALENTS

Sunday Worship Lectors and Communion Assistants are needed
Maintenance chores around the facility
Christian Education Volunteers

BETHANY WEEKLY EVENTS CALENDAR

Sunday	9:00 am Worship, in the Great Room and Facebook Live-Stream/Video
Tuesday	9:00 am Community Coffee in Great Room 9:00 am Cover Girls in Classroom
Wednesday	10:30 am Women's Bible Study via ZOOM
Thursday	7:00 am Men's Breakfast and Bible Study in Great Room 11:00 am Women's Bible Study in Conference Room 6:30 Pub Theology

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