

# BETHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

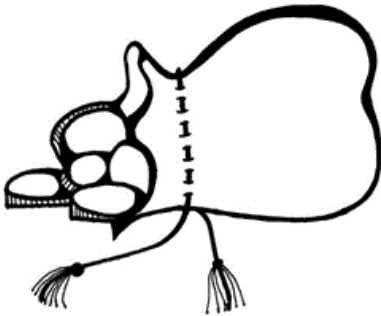
*"You have a place here! Joyfully we profess our faith through God's unconditional love. Here and now God dwells in all of our lives, bears our sins on the cross, and forgives us all."*

## TODAY WE CELEBRATE THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

**9:00 am on Sunday, September 20, 2020**

Holy Communion Worship

*Pastor Dave Johnson, presiding*



Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love.

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### ALL ARE WELCOME

The family of Bethany hopes that your worship experience is spiritually fulfilling and your day begins with our Lord's gifts of peace and joy.

As Christians of the Reformation tradition, we believe that the Sacrament of the Altar is the Real Presence of Christ's body and blood, instituted by Christ Himself as a sign of unity. All baptized and confessing believers are welcome to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion. For those who are worshipping online at home, communion kits may be picked up in the parking lot at Bethany on Saturdays between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m. and on Sundays between 8 and 8:30 a.m.

## **ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR PENTECOST SEASON**

*Minister/Leaders speak regular print—Congregation speaks bold print*

### **THE GATHERING**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God*

#### ▼ **Prelude Reflections for Meditation**

##### ▼ **Welcome and Greeting**

##### ▼ **Prayers and Praises**

##### ▲ **Invocation**

We gather together in the name of the Father,  
the † Son and the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

##### ▲ **Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
whose steadfast love is everlasting,  
whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation.

**Amen.**

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

*(Silence is kept for reflection)*

Faithful God,

**have mercy on us.**

**We confess that we are captive to sin  
and cannot free ourselves.**

**We turn from your loving embrace  
and go our own ways.**

**We pass judgment on one another  
before examining ourselves.**

**We place our own needs before those of our neighbors.**

**We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves.**

**Make us humble, cast away our transgressions,  
and turn us again to life in you**

**through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God hears the cries of all who call out in need,  
and through his death and resurrection,  
Christ has made us his own.

Hear the truth that God proclaims:  
Your sins are forgiven in the name of ☩ Jesus Christ.  
Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness  
to do God's work in the world.

**Amen.**

▼ **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**

Almighty and eternal God,  
**you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot  
rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to  
embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

**Amen.**

## **THE WORD**

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

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

A reading from Jonah 3:10-4:11

When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for

it is better for me to die than to live.” And the Lord said, “Is it right for you to be angry?”

Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. The Lord God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.” But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” Then the Lord said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?” Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: “Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?” Say to them, As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

▼ ***God’s Word from the Psalms (NRSV)***

Let us read responsively from Psalm 145

I will exalt you, my God and king, and bless your name forever and ever.

**Every day will I bless you and praise your name forever and ever.**

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised! There is no end to your greatness.

**One generation shall praise your works to another  
and shall declare your power.**

I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty  
and all your marvelous works.

**They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts,  
and I will recount your greatness.**

They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness;  
 they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.  
**The Lord is gracious and full of compassion,  
 slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

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

A reading from Philippians 1:21-30

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well— since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

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

▼ **God's Word from the Gospel (NRSV)**

▲ The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 18:15-20

**Glory to You, O Lord**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] “For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here

idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

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

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

▼ **Hymn of the Day**

*“Blessed Assurance,” 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 Intercession

Drawn together in the compassion of God,  
we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

*(brief silence)*

Generous God, you make the last first, and the first last.  
Where this gospel challenges the church, equip it for its works of service.  
Strengthen those who suffer for Christ.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Sun and wind, bushes and worms, cattle and great cities—nothing in creation is  
outside your concern, mighty God. In your mercy, tend to it all.

Give us a spirit of generosity toward all you have made.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Where we find envy and create enemies, you provide enough for all. Bring peace to  
places of conflict and violence. Inspire leaders with creativity and wisdom.

Bless the work of negotiators, peacekeepers, and development workers.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Reveal yourself to all in need as you are gracious and merciful, slow to anger,  
abounding in steadfast love, ready to relent from punishing.

Accompany judges and lawyers, victims of crime and those serving sentences.

Give fruitful labor and a livelihood to those seeking work.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Even beyond our expectations, you choose to give generously.

Grant life, health, and courage to all who are in need

*especially Mike Day, Ava Johnson Mitchell (Pastor Dave's Aunt), and  
those who have suffered loss due to disasters, including forest fires and hurricanes, the  
professionals who respond to their needs, and volunteers who are serving their  
neighbors through ELCA Disaster Relief, The Red Cross, and other organizations; those  
who have received prayer shawls and are in need of comfort;  
those who have requested special prayers through our website;  
and others that we now name silently or aloud.*

*(brief silence)*

We praise you for the generations that have declared your power to us.

Give us faithfulness to follow them, living for Christ,  
until you call us to join them in the joyful song around his throne.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else you see that we need,  
we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

▲ **Sharing of the Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

*Greet each other with love and the sign of Christ's peace,*

**THE MEAL**

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ*

▼ **Offering and Presentation of the Gifts**

*July-September Mission ~ Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp*

▲ **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 To Communion**

Friends of Jesus, come to the table. Receive nourishment for your journey.

▼ **Distribution of Communion**

▲ **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**

We give you thanks, gracious God,  
**that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare,  
 the body and blood of Christ.**  
**Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven,  
 into your beloved vineyard  
 to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst,  
 guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ  
 and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.**

**THE SENDING**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world*

▲ **Hymn of Sending**

*“Great Is Thy Faithfulness,” page 11*

▲ **Blessing**

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.**

**Announcements**

*Anyone is welcome to announce any upcoming events or share thoughts of interest*

**Dismissal**

Go in peace. Christ is with you. **Thanks be to God.**

## Blessed Assurance



- 1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
- 2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
- 3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.  
 an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.  
 watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.

### *Refrain*



This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:



this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915

Music: ASSURANCE, Phoebe P. Knapp, 1830–1908

# Great Is Thy Faithfulness



1 Great is thy faith - ful - ness, O God my Fa - ther; there is no  
2 Sum - mer and win - ter and spring - time and har - vest, sun, moon, and  
3 Par - don for sin and a peace that en - dur - eth, thine own dear



shad - ow of turn - ing with thee; thou chang - est not, thy com -  
stars in their cours - es a - bove join with all na - ture in  
pres - ence to cheer and to guide; strength for to - day and bright



pas - sions they fail not; as thou hast been, thou for - ev - er wilt be.  
man - i - fold wit - ness to thy great faith - ful - ness, mer - cy, and love.  
hope for to - mor - row, bless - ings all mine, with ten thou - sand be - side!

## *Refrain*



Great is thy faith - ful - ness! Great is thy faith - ful - ness! Morn - ing by



morn - ing new mer - cies I see; all I have need - ed thy



hand hath pro - vid - ed; great is thy faith - ful - ness, Lord, un - to me.

Text: Thomas O. Chisholm, 1866–1960

Music: FAITHFULNESS, William M. Runyan, 1870–1957

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## ALTAR FLOWERS

In Memory of Ruth Perkins by Vicki Underhill

In Memory of Grandparents Sarah & Bernard Sanford and Aunt Donna,  
from Bernie Brown and Georgia Corsi.

### Announcements and Upcoming Events

The annual Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp Fall Fest begins on September 23, with an online auction featuring more than 80 hand-made quilts and fine art items, along with Fortune Lake Experiences. Bidding closes on October 3. For details visit [www.fortunelake.org](http://www.fortunelake.org).

The next Bethany newsletter will be published on October 1. If you have news or information to share, please submit to the church office by Monday, September 28.

**All are invited to Community Coffee** at 9 a.m. every Tuesday and **Pub Theology**, meeting at Calvary, Quinnesec at 6:30 p.m. every Thursday.

Please contact the church office to request additions or make changes to the prayer list published in our weekly bulletin and newsletter.

**Communion kits** are available for pick-up in the Bethany parking lot from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday and 8 to 8:30 a.m. on Saturday. This is done so those who worship online from their homes have the opportunity to receive communion.

### **Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church**

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Pastor Dave Johnson, phone and e-mail: 651-769-3365, [ftp565@yahoo.com](mailto:ftp565@yahoo.com)

Office Hours: 9:00 a.m.—12 noon, Monday and Thursday, and by appointment.

Tuesday and Wednesday: by appointment.

Lori Ward, Secretary