

# 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."*

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**FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**  
**9:00 am Sunday, April 26, 2026**

*Pastor David Johnson*

## TODAY'S REFLECTION



Today is sometimes called "Good Shepherd Sunday." Jesus is called the "gate" of the sheep in today's gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism. Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world's violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God's tender care to all creation.

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

*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**

*“Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us” page 9*

▲ **In Confession & Forgiveness for Easter Worship**

We serve a risen Savior yet we live as if in chains. Forgive us, Lord that we are so hesitant to live the resurrection life. Forgive us that we fail to show through word and action the truth that you loved us into your kingdom through the glorious mystery of the Cross.

Forgive us that there is still fear in our lives that prevents us from achieving our full potential. Draw us close. Open our eyes to the glory of the risen Christ, our hearts to the wonder of the Cross and our hands to the service of your kingdom where you have placed us, that your name might be glorified through our lives.

**Amen.**

*Silence for Reflection*

God of resurrection of life and death and rebirth **renew our hearts and minds**

God of promise of all beginnings and all endings **renew our hearts and minds**

God of hope of new growth and harvest **renew our hearts and minds**

(by John Birch, Faith and Worship Blogspot)

▲ **Absolution**

▲ **Prayer of the Day**

O God our shepherd, **you know your sheep by name and lead us to safety through the valleys of death. Guide us by your voice, that we may walk in certainty and security to the joyous feast prepared in your house, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

**Amen.**

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

*The First Reading is from Acts 2:42-47*

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

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

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

*Psalm 23*

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. **He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;**

he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

**Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.**

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

*The Second Reading is from 1 Peter 2:19-25*

For it is a commendable thing if, being aware of God, a person endures pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do good and suffer for it, this is a commendable thing before God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

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

▼ **Children's Sermon**

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

*The Holy Gospel according to John 10:1-10*

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

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

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

▼ **Hymn of the Day**

*“The King of Love My Shepherd Is” 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*

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

*A brief silence*

Shepherding God, draw all people to yourself and lead them in paths of righteousness. Embolden your church to enter the valleys of the world and guide us beside the still waters of your grace. We pray for military and prison chaplains serving near and far.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Creator God, by the resurrection of your Son, show us your steadfast love and instruct our hearts in your ways. Help us to revere and protect the wonders of your creation.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Righteous Judge, strengthen and uphold those who work for justice and advocate for human rights. Bring an end to oppression and save us from the temptation of violence or vengeance. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Great Physician, walk with those who are grieving, and anoint those who are ill or injured especially for those we name before you now (either in silence or out loud). Restore them to health of body, mind, and spirit. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Good Shepherd, continually seek us out as lambs of your flock, and form us into a community where all are honored and cared for. Spread a feast before us and fill our cups to overflowing. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Living God, we praise you for the saints who have died in faith and now dwell in your love. At our end, bring us, with them, to our heavenly home. Merciful God, **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**

## ▲ *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 April—June—**Fortune Lake**▼ **Offering Prayer**

Merciful God,  
 accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory.  
 You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day  
 when we will hunger and thirst no more.  
 Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus,  
 that goodness and mercy may follow us  
 and bless the world you love.  
 In the name of Jesus,

▼ **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**

Come to the table of new life.  
Receive the risen Lord.

Let Us Break Bread Together



1 Let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees;  
2 Let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees;  
3 Let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees;



let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees.  
let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees.  
let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees.



When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing



sun, O Lord, have mer - cy on me.

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 One,  
through this meal you have made your home among us  
and are making all things new.

Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts,  
to love our enemies,  
and to bring your healing to the nations.

In the name of Jesus,

**Amen.**

**THE SENDING**

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

▼ **Closing Hymn**

*“Lord Whose Love in Humble Service” 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. Praise the Lord. Alleluia!

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

## Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us



1 Sav-ior like a shep-herd lead us; much we need your ten - der care.  
 2 We are yours; in love be - friend us, be the guard-ian of our way;  
 3 You have prom-ised to re - ceive us, poor and sin - ful though we be;  
 4 Ear - ly let us seek your fa - vor, ear - ly let us do your will;



In your pleas-ant pas-tures feed us, for our use your fold pre-pare.  
 keep your flock, from sin de - fend us, seek us when we go a - stray.  
 you have mer - cy to re - lieve us, grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free.  
 bless - ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior, with your love our spir - its fill.



Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.



Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.

## The King of Love My Shepherd Is

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1 The King of love my shep - herd is, Whose good - ness  
 2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, My ran - somed  
 3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, But yet in  
 4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill, With thee, dear

fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if  
 soul he lead - eth And, where the ver - dant  
 love he sought me, And on his shoul - der  
 Lord, be - side me, Thy rod and staff my

I am his And he is mine for - ev - er.  
 pas - tures grow, With food ce - les - tial feed - eth.  
 gent - ly laid, And home, re - joic - ing, brought me.  
 com - fort still; Thy cross be - fore to guide me.

5 Thou spreadst a table in my sight;  
 Thine unction grace bestoweth;  
 And, oh, what transport of delight  
 From thy pure chalice floweth!

6 And so, through all the length of days,  
 Thy goodness faileth never.  
 Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise  
 Within thy house forever.

## Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service



1 Lord, whose love in hum-ble ser-vice bore the weight of hu-man need,  
 2 Still your chil-dren wan-der home-less; still the hun-gry cry for bread;  
 3 As we wor-ship, grant us vi-sion, till your love's re-veal-ing light  
 4 Called by wor-ship to your ser-vice, forth in your dear name we go,



who up-on the cross, for-sak-en, worked your mer-cy's per-fect deed:  
 still the cap-tives long for free-dom; still in grief we mourn our dead.  
 in its height and depth and great-ness dawns up-on our quick-ened sight,  
 to the child, the youth, the a-ged, love in liv-ing deeds to show;



we, your ser-vants, bring the wor-ship not of voice a-lone, but heart;  
 As you, Lord, in deep com-pas-sion healed the sick and freed the soul,  
 mak-ing known the needs and bur-dens your com-pas-sion bids us bear,  
 hope and health, good-will and com-fort, coun-sel, aid, and peace we give,



con-se-crat-ing to your pur-pose ev-'ry gift which you im-part.  
 by your Spir-it send your pow-er to our world to make it whole.  
 stir-ring us to ar-dent ser-vice, your a-bun-dant life to share.  
 that your ser-vants, Lord, in free-dom may your mer-cy know and live.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–1984

Music: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844

Text © Oxford University Press

## Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church

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## ONLINE BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH OFFERING DONATIONS

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

**[norwaybethany.org](http://norwaybethany.org)**: Click the donate button on the upper right side of the page to directly access Bethany's secure PayPal Account.

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## MORE SPECIAL WAYS TO GIVE THROUGH YOUR TIME AND TALENTS

Sunday Worship Lectors and Communion Assistants are needed

Service Assistant to advance projected bulletin slides

Maintenance chores around the facility

Christian Education Volunteers

## BETHANY WEEKLY EVENTS CALENDAR

<b>Sunday</b>	9:00 am Worship, in the Great Room and Facebook Live-Stream/Video
<b>Tuesday</b>	9:00 am Community Coffee in Great Room 9:00 am Cover Girls in Classroom
<b>Wednesday</b>	10:30 am Women's Bible Study via ZOOM 6:00 pm Confirmation Classes
<b>Thursday</b>	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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