

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."*

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

9:00 am Sunday, July 5, 2026

Pastor David Johnson

TODAY'S REFLECTION



The mystery of God's ways is sometimes hidden from the wise and intelligent. The prophet describes an everlasting realm that contrasts with earthly nations, one marked by peace, humility, and freedom. Jesus associates with those excluded from the religious community. Like Paul, we struggle with selfish desires; we lament flawed systems; and we seek God's mercy and forgiveness. We gather around word, water, and meal by Christ's invitation: "Come to me, all you that are weary." Here we find rest for our souls and hope for life in beloved community.

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**

“America the Beautiful” page 9

▲ **Confession & Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose compassion endures forever.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence for Reflection

Compassionate God,

we confess to you all our sins.

Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves.

In your mercy, call us back to you.

Your yoke is easy and your burden is light.

Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray,

Amen.

Jesus says, “Come to me, all you who are weary
and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest.” In the name of God,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love.

Amen.

▲ **Prayer of the Day**

You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

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

The First Reading is from Zechariah 9: 9-12

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

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! See, your king come to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double.

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

Psalm 145: 8-14

The LORD is gracious and merciful, **slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

The LORD is good to all, **and his compassion is over all that he has made.**

All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD, **and all your faithful shall bless you.**

They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power, **to make known to all people your mighty deeds and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.**

Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, **and your dominion endures throughout all generations.**

The LORD is faithful in all his words and gracious in all his deeds. **The LORD upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down.**

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

The Second Reading is from Romans 7: 15-25a

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I who do it but sin that dwells within me. For I know that the good does not dwell within me, that is, in my flesh. For the desire to do the good lies close at hand, but not the ability.

For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it but sin that dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that, when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched person that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

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

▼ **Children's Sermon**

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

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 11: 16-19, 25-30

Glory to you, O Lord.

But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another, We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon'; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds." At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

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

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

▼ **Hymn of the Day**

"God Bless America" 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 come⁵ 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 God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence

God our unity, your church flourishes in different languages, cultures, and movements. Grant us wisdom to discern when our yokes are too heavy, that we may live and serve in the freedom of your rest. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our life-giver, we grieve the pains placed upon our common home through war and neglect. What you have lovingly crafted, guide us to lovingly tend.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our freedom, you are no tyrant but bring peace. As this nation marks its declaration of independence, teach us our part in announcing peace for future generations. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our comfort, liberate all in our community who are captive to fear, who have become isolated or ill, or who are in any need (*especially for those we name before you now in silence or out loud*). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our guide, we do not always have the strength to do the good we wish to do. Free us from the cycles of violence that bind us, that all know your liberation.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our home, you model freedom through the love shared across communities of trust and goodwill. As we remember those now gone to eternal rest (*especially*), we thank you for the gifts of life together. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus. 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 July-September—**Feed America-Good Samaritan**

▼ **Offering Prayer**

Loving God,

we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts.

**Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love,
so that all creation can taste your abundance.**

**We ask this in the name of Jesus,
through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever.**

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**

Heaven has come near.

Come, share in the feast!

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**

Compassionate God,
through the gifts of bread and wine
our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love.
Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal,
may share your love freely, as you have shared with us.
We ask this in the name of Jesus,
through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever.
Amen.

THE SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

▼ **Closing Hymn**

“God Be With You Till We Meet Again” 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.

Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

O Beautiful for Spacious Skies



1 O beau - ti - ful for spa - cious skies, for am - ber waves of grain,
 2 O beau - ti - ful for he - roes proved in lib - er - at - ing strife,
 3 O beau - ti - ful for pa - triot dream that sees be - yond the years



for pur - ple moun-tain maj - es - ties a - bove the fruit-ed plain:
 who more than self their coun-try loved, and mer - cy more than life:
 thine al - a - bas - ter cit - ies gleam, un - dimmed by hu - man tears:



A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God shed his grace on thee,
 A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! May God thy gold re - fine,
 A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God mend thine ev - 'ry flaw,



and crown thy good with broth-er-hood from sea to shin-ing sea.
 till all suc-cess be no - ble-ness, and ev - 'ry gain di - vine.
 con - firm thy soul in self - con-trol, thy lib - er - ty in law.

Text: Katherine L. Bates, 1859–1929

Music: MATERNA, Samuel A. Ward, 1848–1903

God Bless America 2x

Words and Music by IRVING BERLIN

D *Dmaj7* *Fdim* *A* *G* *A7* *D*
E♭ *E♭maj7* *G♭dim7* *B♭* *A♭* *B♭7* *E♭*

God bless A - mer - i - ca, land that I love. Stand be-

G *D* *E7* *A7* *D*
A♭ *E♭* *F7* *B♭7* *E♭*

side her and guide her through the night with a light from a - bove. From the

A7 *D* *A7* *D* *A* *D7*
B♭7 *E♭* *B♭7* *E♭* *B♭* *E♭7*

moun - tains to the prai - ries, to the o - ceans white with foam.

G *D* *C#dim* *D* *Bm* *Em7* *D* *A7* *D* *C#dim* *D7*
A♭ *E♭* *Ddim* *E♭* *Cm* *Fm7* *E♭* *B♭7* *E♭* *Ddim* *E♭7*

God bless A - mer - i - ca, my home sweet home.

G *A* *D* *Bm* *Em7* *D* *A7* *G* *D*
A♭ *B♭* *E♭* *Cm* *Fm7* *E♭* *B♭7* *A♭* *E♭*

God bless A - mer - i - ca, my home sweet home. ———

God Be with You Till We Meet Again



- 1 God be with you till we meet a - gain; by good coun-sels guide, up - hold you,
- 2 God be with you till we meet a - gain; ho - ly wings se - cure - ly hide you,
- 3 God be with you till we meet a - gain; when life's per - ils thick con - found you,



with a shep-herd's care en - fold you;
 dai - ly man - na still pro - vide you; God be with you till we meet a - gain.
 put un - fail - ing arms a - round you;

Refrain



Till we meet, till we meet, till we meet at Je - sus' feet;



till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet a - gain.

Text: Jeremiah E. Rankin, 1828–1904

Music: GOD BE WITH YOU, William G. Tomer, 1833–1896

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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

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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