

# 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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## SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

**9:00 am Sunday, July 12, 2026**

*Pastor David Johnson*

### TODAY'S REFLECTION



God's word is like the rain that waters the earth and brings forth vegetation. It is also like the sower who scatters seed indiscriminately. Our lives are like seeds sown in the earth. Even from what appears to be little, dormant, or dead, God promises a harvest. At the Lord's table we are fed with the bread of life, that we may bear fruit in the world.

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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**

*“Let All Things Now Living” 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**

**Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen**

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

*The First Reading is from Isaiah 55:10-13*

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. For you shall go out in joy and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle, and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

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

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

*Psalms 65:9-13*

You visit the earth and water it; you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; **you provide the people with grain, for so you have prepared it.**

You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges, **softening it with showers, and blessing its growth.**

You crown the year with your bounty; **your wagon tracks overflow with richness.** The pastures of the wilderness overflow; **the hills gird themselves with joy;** the meadows clothe themselves with flocks; the valleys deck themselves with grain; **they shout and sing together for joy.**

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

*The Second Reading is from Romans 8: 1-11*

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason, the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed, it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

<sup>4</sup> But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

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 13:1-9, 18-23*

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. If you have ears, hear!"

"Hear, then, the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet such a person has no root but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this age and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

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

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

▼ **Hymn of the Day**

*“Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil” 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 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 gardener, you scatter grace like seed across the world. Continue to cultivate the garden of your church with your abundant Spirit. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our joy, your bountiful creation reflects your commitment to life despite our actions disregarding its wonder. We look toward Isaiah’s vision, when all creation rejoices, and the trees will clap for joy at your salvation. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our life, you give us the same Spirit by which you raised Christ from the dead. Set our minds on that Spirit whenever fear or condemnation overwhelm throughout the world. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our host and table, we pray for children who hunger and rely on school meals, for all who toil under the hot sun without refreshment, for the chronically ill who have exhausted their resources, and for local concerns. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our source, tend this assembly with your grace throughout this summer season. May those who travel for work or recreation do so safely, and may visitors find refreshment among us. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We give you thanks that the roots of your goodness run deep throughout history. We remember those saints who have gone before us in faith. 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**

*“Make Me A Channel of Your Peace” 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!**



# Let All Things Now Living

Text: Katherine K. Davis, 1892–1980, alt.  
 Music: THE ASH GROVE, Welsh folk tune  
 Text © 1939, 1966 E. C. Schirmer Music Company.



1 Let all things now liv - ing a song of thanks - giv - ing to  
 2 God rules all the forc - es: the stars in their cours - es and



God the cre - a - tor tri - um - phant - ly raise,  
 sun in its or - bit o - be - dient - ly shine;



who fash - ioned and made us, pro - tect - ed and stayed us, who  
 the hills and the moun - tains, the riv - ers and foun - tains, the



still guides us on to the end of our days,  
 deeps of the o - cean pro - claim God di - vine.



God's ban - ners are o'er us, God's light goes be -  
 We too should be voic - ing our love and re -



fore us, a pil - lar of fire shin - ing forth in the night,  
 joic - ing; with glad ad - o - ra - tion a song let us raise



till shad - ows have van - ished and dark - ness is ban - ished, as  
 till all things now liv - ing u - nite in thanks - giv - ing: "To



for - ward we trav - el from light in - to light.  
 God in the high - est, ho - san - na and praise!"

# Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.



Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.



When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,



warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.



Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

Text: Handt Hanson, b. 1950

Music: GOOD SOIL, Handt Hanson

Text and music © 1985 Prince of Peace Publishing, Changing Church, Inc., admin. Augsburg Fortress.

# Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

Text: Sebastian Temple  
 Music: PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS, Sebastian Temple  
 Text and music © 1967 OCP Publications



1 Make me a chan - nel of your peace.  
 2 Make me a chan - nel of your peace.  
 4 Make me a chan - nel of your peace.



Where there is ha - tred, let me bring your love;  
 Where there's de - spair in life, let me bring hope;  
 It is in par - don - ing that we are par - doned,

*Last time to coda* ☸



where there is in - ju - ry, your par - don, Lord;  
 where there is dark - ness, . . . . . on - ly light;  
 in giv - ing of our - selves that we re



and where there's doubt, true faith in you.  
 and where there's sad - ness, ev - er joy.



3 O Mas - ter, grant that I may nev - er seek so



much to be con - soled as to con - sole, to be



un - der - stood as to un - der - stand, to be



loved as to love with all my soul.

*D.C. (stanza 4) al coda*



ceive, and in dy - ing that we're born to e - ter - nal life.

## 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.

**[facebook.com/BethanyLutheranChurchElca](https://facebook.com/BethanyLutheranChurchElca):** Click the "Shop Now" button on the upper right corner to directly access Bethany's secure PayPal Account.

## 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

|               |                                                                   |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <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 |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|

|                 |                                                       |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <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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