

# BETHEL LUTHERAN

E.L.C.A.

G R O V E C I T Y

6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter  
May 5, 2024

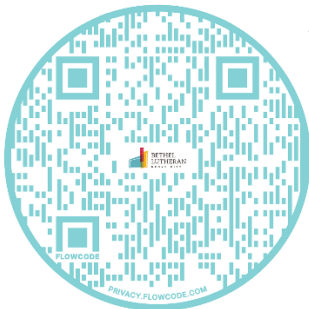
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Worship Services 8:30 A.M. & 10:30 A.M.

Welcome  
to Bethel Lutheran

We extend special greetings to all our guests who are with us today. Your presence, along with our members and friends, is truly valued. Know that all of God's people are always welcome here at Bethel.

If you would like to know more about Bethel Lutheran, her pastor, the Rev. Peter I. Ray, or any of the parish's programs and activities, please contact the church office (875-0510). You may also check out our website by scanning the QR code below. Again, welcome; and may you have a blessed week!



### About Bethel Lutheran Church

Bethel has been serving the Grove City community since 1968, ministering to its members and friends, supporting Lutheran Social Services programs like Faith Mission and LSS Food Pantry.

Bethel is in partnership with nearly 9,000 sister congregations, 26 Lutheran colleges (including Capital University, Bexley and Wittenberg, Springfield), 7 seminaries (including Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Bexley), 240+ world-wide missionaries in more than 40 countries and non-profit social services network, Lutheran World Relief...all ministries of the 4-million-member **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (E.L.C.A.)**. Bethel Lutheran Church is also home to The Amazing Kids Academy Preschool, Stephen Ministries, AA groups, as well as other community organizations.

Bethel Lutheran Church is a member of Pride in Grove City.

## Welcome

We, the members of Bethel Lutheran Church, Grove City, Ohio, believe the following statement represents our commitment and desire to reach out and welcome those in need of and searching for God's love.

***We believe we are all created in God's image and are all called to love our neighbors as Jesus loves us. We believe we are many members, but one body in Christ, and called to unite all people in God's love. We welcome and affirm all people. We invite those who are seeking God's presence in their lives to join us in our common journey. Our faith community seeks to unite persons of all ages, races, nationalities, ethnic background, sexual orientations, gender identities, mental and physical abilities, socioeconomic levels, and theological backgrounds. Together in our diversity, and being empowered and directed by the Holy Spirit, we will continually strive to "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God." (Micah 6:8)***

## Worship and young children

All children are welcome in worship. They are a valued part of this faith community.

In addition, Bethel's Nursery (for children up to approximately four years of age) has paid staff at both services. This is available to meet the needs of your family and the worshiping needs of the congregation.

We have a "Parentseeker" paging system for optimal communication between nursery and parents worshiping in the sanctuary.

Children's bulletins are also available in the narthex for younger children to help them make age-appropriate connections with our weekly themes.

Bethel has video monitors in the narthex and hallways if your child gets restless.



This Sunday's image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. We are called to serve others as Jesus came to serve; but for John's gospel, the image of servanthood is too hierarchical, too distant, to capture the essence of life with Christ. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us. The Greeks believed that true friends are willing to die for each other. This is the mutual love of Christian community commanded by Christ and enabled by the Spirit.

- ❖ Quiet reverence before the liturgy allows prayer and meditation
- ❖ Please do not bring food or drinks into the Sanctuary during Worship
- ❖ Throughout the service, **C** means the congregation responds as the **bold print** indicates.
- ❖ As a worship courtesy, **please silence or turn off** all cellular phones and other communication devices during the service.

# Gathering

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### PRELUDE

*(please stand and face the baptismal font)*

### THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,  
the wellspring of grace, our Easter and our joy.

C **Amen.**

P Look, here is water!

C **Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

P Immersed in the promises of baptism,  
let us give thanks for what God has done for us.  
We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning  
your voice thundered over the deep  
and water became the essence of life.  
Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers.  
The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day.  
Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea  
into freedom's land.  
In a desert pool the Ethiopian official  
entered your boundless baptismal life.  
Look, here is water!

C **Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

P At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John  
 and anointed with the Holy Spirit.  
 By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection  
 you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love,  
 freeing us to live as Easter people.  
 We rejoice with glad hearts,  
 giving all honor and praise to you,  
 through the risen Christ, our source of living water,  
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C Amen.

P Look, here is water!

C Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

OPENING HYMN

*I Come With Joy*

ELW #482



1 I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and  
 2 I come with Chris - tians far and near to find, as all are  
 3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud di - vi - sion  
 4 The Spir - it of the ris - en Christ, un - seen, but ev - er  
 5 To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound by all that God has



free, the life of Je - sus to re - call in  
 fed, the new com - mu - ni - ty of love in  
 ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and  
 near, is in such friend - ship bet - ter known, a -  
 done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the



love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.  
Christ's com - mu - nion bread, in Christ's com - mu - nion bread.  
strang - ers now are friends, and strang - ers now are friends.  
live a - mong us here, a - live a - mong us here.  
love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.

### **APOSTOLIC GREETING**

**P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C** **And also with you.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P** O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond understanding. Pour into our hearts such love for you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises, which exceed all we can desire; through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

*(please be seated)*

### **CHILDREN'S TIME**

# Word

## FIRST READING (10:30)

Acts 10:44-48

*While Peter shares the good news of Jesus with a Gentile soldier and his family, the Holy Spirit comes upon them. Recognizing that the Spirit works inclusively in the lives of both Jews and Gentiles, Peter commands that these Gentiles also be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.*

<sup>44</sup>While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. <sup>45</sup>The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, <sup>46</sup>for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, <sup>47</sup>“Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” <sup>48</sup>So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

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



**PSALM (10:30)**

**Psalm 98**

<sup>1</sup>Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done | marvelous things,  
whose right hand and holy arm have | won the victory.

<sup>2</sup>O LORD, you have made | known your victory,  
you have revealed your righteousness in the sight | of the nations.

<sup>3</sup>You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the | house of  
Israel;

all the ends of the earth have seen the victory | of our God.

<sup>4</sup>Shout with joy to the LORD, | all you lands;  
lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.

<sup>5</sup>Sing to the LORD | with the harp,  
with the harp and the | voice of song.

<sup>6</sup>With trumpets and the sound | of the horn  
shout with joy before the | king, the LORD.

<sup>7</sup>Let the sea roar, and | all that fills it,  
the world and those who | dwell therein.

<sup>8</sup>Let the rivers | clap their hands,  
and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, who comes to | judge  
the  
earth.

<sup>9</sup>The LORD will judge the | world with righteousness  
and the peoples with equity.

**SECOND READING (10:30)**

**1 John**

**5:1-6**

*God's children believe that Jesus is the Messiah and love God by keeping God's commandments. Thus the world is conquered not through military might but through love and faith.*

<sup>1</sup>Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. <sup>2</sup>By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. <sup>3</sup>For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, <sup>4</sup>for whatever is born of God conquers the world.

And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. <sup>5</sup>Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

<sup>6</sup>This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

**P** The Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

*(please stand, as able)*

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

**P** The Holy Gospel according to John.

**C** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

## GOSPEL

John 15:9-17

*On the night of his arrest, Jesus delivers a final testimony to his disciples to help them in the days ahead. Here, he repeats the most important of all his commands, that they love one another.*

[Jesus said:] <sup>9</sup>“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. <sup>10</sup>If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. <sup>11</sup>I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

<sup>12</sup>“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup>No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. <sup>14</sup>You are my friends if you do what I command you. <sup>15</sup>I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. <sup>16</sup>You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. <sup>17</sup>I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

**C Praise to you, O Christ.**

(please be seated)

## SERMON

Rev. Peter I. Ray

(please stand, as able)

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*Come Down, O Love Divine*

ELW #804



1 Come down, O Love di - vine; seek thou this soul of mine  
 2 Oh, let it free - ly burn, till world - ly pas - sions turn  
 3 Let ho - ly char - i - ty mine out - ward ves - ture be,  
 4 And so the yearn - ing strong, with which the soul will long,



and vis - it it with thine own ar - dor glow - ing;  
 to dust and ash - es in its heat con - sum - ing;  
 and low - li - ness be - come mine in - ner cloth - ing—  
 shall far out - pass the pow'r of hu - man tell - ing;



O Com - fort - er, draw near; with - in my heart ap - pear  
 and let thy glo - rious light shine ev - er on my sight,  
 true low - li - ness of heart, which takes the hum - bler part,  
 no soul can guess Love's grace till it be - come the place



and kin - dle it, thy ho - ly flame be - stow - ing.  
 and clothe me round, the while my path il - lum - ing.  
 and o'er its own short - com - ings weeps with loath - ing.  
 where - in the Ho - ly Spir - it makes a dwell - ing.

## **APOSTLES CREED**

**C I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come 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**

**P Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray  
for**

**the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.**

***A brief silence.***

**P Your Holy Spirit falls upon all who hear the word. Fill your church with  
the**

**gifts of your Spirit and give understanding hearts to those who  
strengthen our commitments with our ecumenical and interreligious  
partners. God of grace,**

**C hear our prayer.**

P You speak and the face of the earth is renewed. Revive your creation, that habitats and every kind of living thing might flourish. Protect endangered species and help us to care for all your creatures. God of grace,

**C Hear our prayer.**

P Your world is divided and the nations rage. Grant wisdom and vision to world

leaders, that they may seek justice, peace, and the good of all.

Strengthen international partnerships and cooperation. God of grace,

**C Hear our prayer.**

P Your children are in need. Comfort all those who suffer, especially those afflicted by anxiety, depression, and mental illness. Help us to be conduits of your love in our care for one another. (*We pray especially for . . .*) God of grace,

**C Hear our prayer.**

P Your work is done in this place with our hands. Bless the ministries of this congregation (*ministries may be named*), that we may embody your love for the world. Inspire those who plan and lead worship, council members, committee members, and volunteers. God of grace,

**C Hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

P Your blessed saints now rest in you. Give us thankful hearts for those who have gone before us (*especially*). At the last, bring us all together around your heavenly banquet table. God of grace,

**C Hear our prayer.**

P Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord.

**C Amen.**

# Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

## SHARING OF THE PEACE

**P** The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C** And also with you.

*(You may share a sign of God's peace such as a handshake, wave, hug or other appropriate greeting.)*

*(please be seated)*

## OFFERING

*An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, and the care of those in need. If you are a first-time visitor, it is our privilege to have you worship with us. Please do not feel the need or obligation to give a financial offering. Your presence is gift enough to God and to us.*

Our members and friends have the privilege to participate in faithful financial stewardship. They share their gifts by envelope, direct deposit and other electronic means. Scan the QR Code below where you can give electronically.



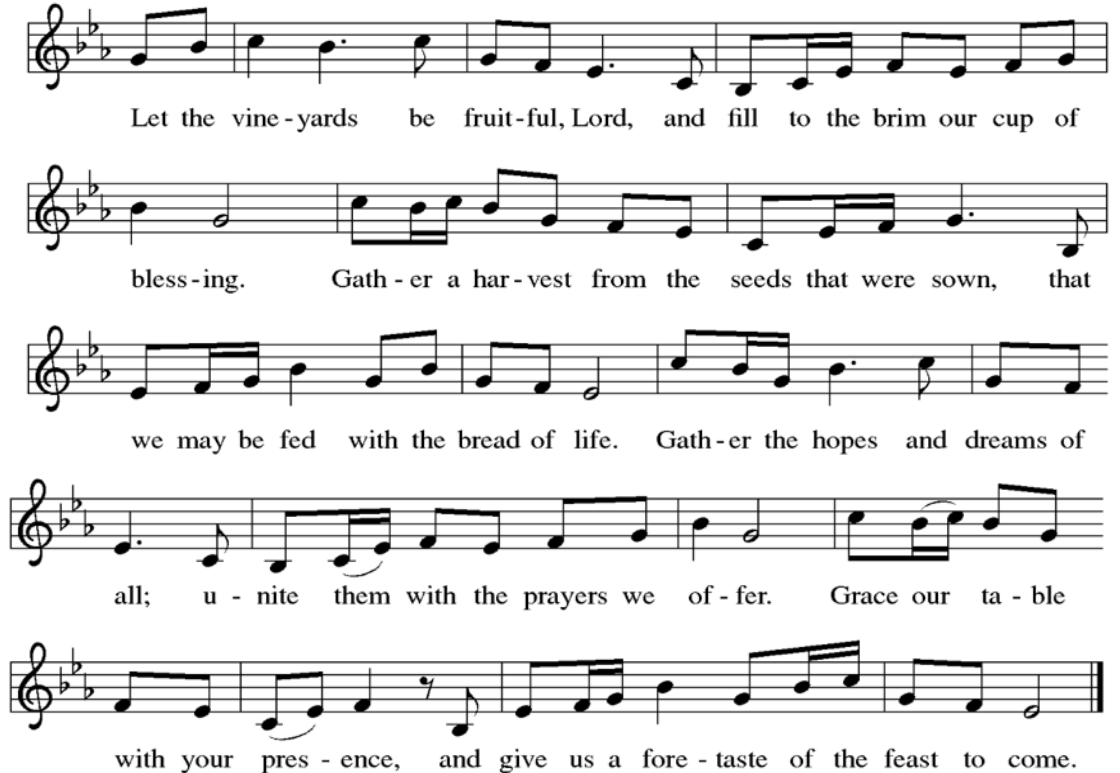
**OFFERTORY ANTHEM**

*Love One Another*

Chancel Choir

*(please stand, as able)*

**OFFERTORY RESPONSE**



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that  
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of  
all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble  
with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

The musical score is written on five staves in a single system. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody is simple and lyrical, with lyrics printed below the notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.



## OFFERTORY PRAYER

A Risen One,  
you call us to believe and bear fruit.  
May the gifts that we offer here  
be signs of your abiding love.  
Form us to be your witnesses in the world,  
through Jesus Christ, our true vine.

C Amen.

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

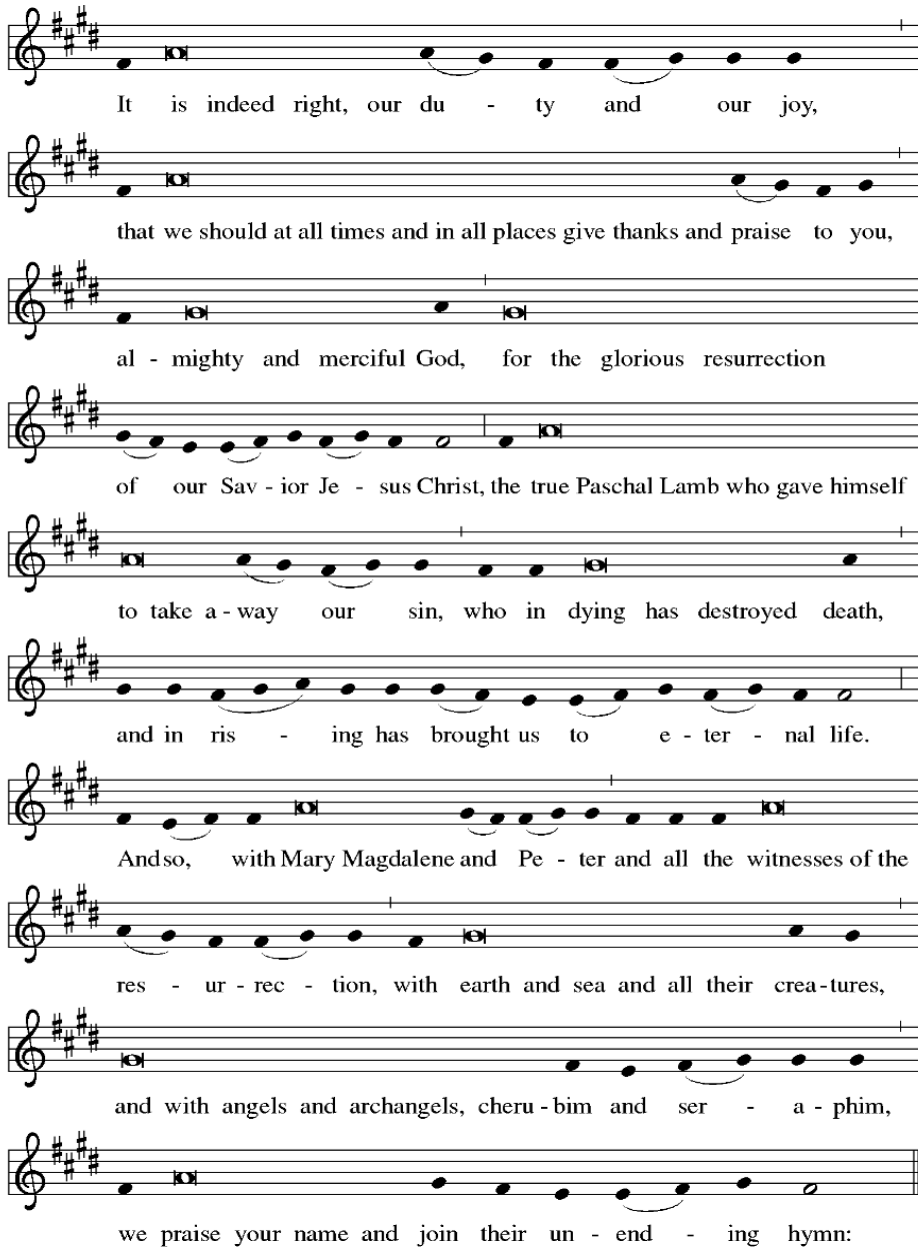
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

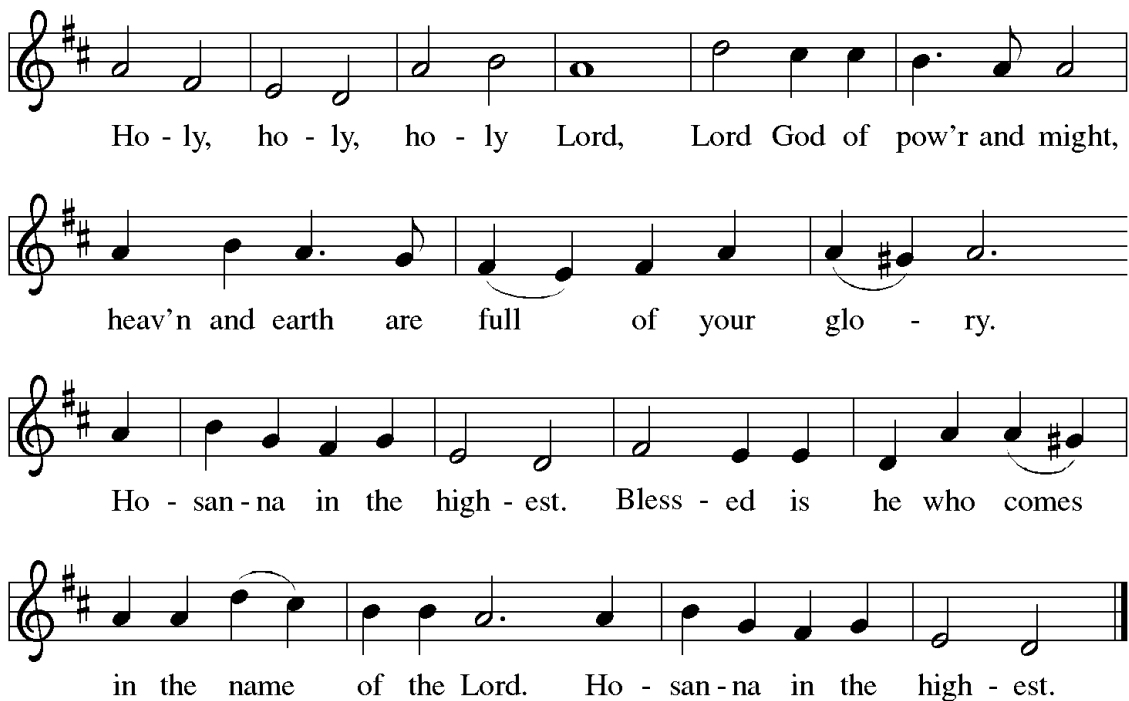
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

## PREFACE



It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,  
al - mighty and merciful God, for the glorious resurrection  
of our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself  
to take a - way our sin, who in dying has destroyed death,  
and in ris - ing has brought us to e - ter - nal life.  
And so, with Mary Magdalene and Pe - ter and all the witnesses of the  
res - ur - rec - tion, with earth and sea and all their crea - tures,  
and with angels and archangels, cheru - bim and ser - a - phim,  
we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

## SANTUS (Holy, Holy, Holy)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,  
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

## EUCCHARIST PRAYER

- P** Holy God,  
you alone are holy,  
you alone are God.  
The universe declares your praise:  
beyond the stars;  
beneath the sea;  
within each cell;  
with every breath.
- C** We praise you, O God.

P Generations bless your faithfulness:  
through the water;  
by night and day;  
across the wilderness;  
out of exile;  
into the future.

**C We bless you, O God.**

P We give you thanks for your dear Son:  
at the heart of human life;  
near to those who suffer;  
beside the sinner;  
among the poor;  
with us now.

**C We thank you, O God.**

P 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,  
and 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.

P Remembering his love for us  
on the way,  
at the table,  
and to the end,  
we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**C Christ has died.  
Christ is risen.  
Christ will come again.**

P We pray for the gift of your Spirit:  
in our gathering;  
within this meal;  
among your people;  
throughout the world.

Blessing, praise, and thanks  
to you, holy God,  
through Christ Jesus,  
by your Spirit,  
in your church,  
without end.

**C Amen.**



## THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C **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

P The risen Christ is made known to us  
In the breaking of the bread.  
Come and eat at God's table.

C **Amen.**

*(please be seated)*

## COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Bethel welcomes to the Lord's table all baptized Christians who believe that Christ is truly present in the bread and wine of this meal. Children and adults who want to receive a blessing instead of bread and wine may cross their arms over their chest as they come forward. All are welcome!

### AGNUS DEI (Lamb of God)



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

**DISTRIBUTION HYMN**

*Come To The Table*

ELW #481



Come to the ta - ble of mer - cy, pre - pared with the wine and the bread.



All who are hun - gry and thirst - y, come, and your souls will be fed.



Come at the Lord's in - vi - ta - tion; re - ceive from his nail - scarred hand.



Eat of the bread of sal - va - tion; drink of the blood of the Lamb.

*(please stand, as able)*

**PASTORAL COMMENDATION**

**P** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ  
strengthen and keep you in his grace.

**C** Amen.



## POST COMMUNION PRAYER

A Shepherding God,  
you have prepared a table before us  
and nourished us with your love.  
Send us forth from this banquet  
to proclaim your goodness  
and share the abundant mercy of Jesus,  
our redeemer and friend.

C Amen.

Gathering • Word • Meal • Sending

# Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission out into the world.

## BLESSING

P Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

P The God of resurrection power,  
the Christ of unending joy,  
and the Spirit of Easter hope  
✝ bless you now and always.

C Amen.

**CLOSING HYMN**

*Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee*

ELW #836



1 Joy - ful, joy - ful we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!  
2 All thy works with joy sur - round thee, earth and heav'n re - flect thy rays,  
3 Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blest,



Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore thee, prais - ing thee, their sun a - bove.  
stars and an - gels sing a - round thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.  
well - spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean - depth of hap - py rest!



Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive the gloom of doubt a - way.  
Field and for - est, vale and moun - tain, flow - 'ry mead - ow, flash - ing sea,  
Thou our Fa - ther, Christ our broth - er, all who live in love are thine;



Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad - ness, fill us with the light of day.  
chant - ing bird, and flow - ing foun - tain call us to re - joice in thee.  
teach us how to love each oth - er, lift us to the joy di - vine!

**DISMISSAL**

A Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.

C Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

**POSTLUDE**

## Bethel's Staff

**Lead Pastor: The Rev. Peter I. Ray**

**Care & Visitation Pastor: The Rev. Jeffrey N. Wise**

**Organist/Director of Music: Ward Matthias**

**Pianist/Associate Musician: Ruth Hiles**

**Director of Choirs: Bree Johnson**

**Youth Coordinator: Jennifer Bueter**

**Nursery Director: Crystal Smith**

**Pre-School Directors: Jennifer Bueter & Cathy Tallman**

**Church Administrator: Cathy Tallman**

**Retired/Resource Pastors: The Rev. Wil Hallman**

**The Rev. Andrew Mazak**

**The Rev. Joe Stark**

### A Land Statement

*"We acknowledge that we gather as Bethel Lutheran Church on the traditional land of the Shawnee and Ofo and Kaskaskia Peoples past and present, including the Adena/Hopewell Cultures, and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. This calls us to commit to continuing to learn how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit as well."*