

BETHEL LUTHERAN

E.L.C.A.

G R O V E C I T Y

FOURTH SUNDAY IN EASTER
May 11, 2025

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.

Never been to a “Lutheran” or “liturgical” church? It might at first seem strange with all the singing and sitting down and standing up. Know all we do has meaning and function. Pastor Ray is happy to explain any confusing things for you. 🤔

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!

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.

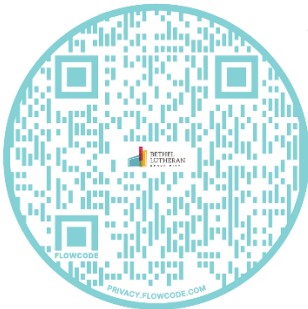
We have a “Parentseeker” paging system for optimal communication between nursery and parents worshiping in the sanctuary.

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.



The gift of new life, of eternal life, is the gift of the risen Christ. It is the promise of Jesus. It was true for Dorcas in Joppa. It was true for those "who have come out of the great ordeal" in the Revelation vision. It is true for us and for all the baptized: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.



Scan to be directed to our website

- ❖ 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

Rev. Peter I. Ray

PRELUDE

(please stand and face the baptismal font)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C Christ is risen, indeed. Alleluia!

P In the name of ✠ the One
who was, who is, and who is to come.

C Amen.

P Baptized into Christ's death and resurrection,
and called to live the baptized life,
let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.
Water may be poured before or during the thanksgiving.
Holy God,
we give you thanks for the waters of baptism,
waters that make a people your own,
that restore to wholeness,
and empower us to be witnesses in your name.
Baptized into you, O Living One,

C make us one as you are one.

P We give you thanks for the waters of baptism,
waters that strengthen believers
and give new life to beloved servants of your church;
waters that extend your boundless love
and cross barriers of our own making.
Baptized into you, O Living One,

C make us one as you are one.

P We give you thanks for the waters of baptism,
waters that open the hearts of believers
and give a voice in the night to those in captivity;
waters that set your people on a new path,
rejoicing in the Spirit's power.
Baptized into you, O Living One,

C make us one as you are one.

P Grant us grace, love, and life, O Living One,
that our every day is shaped by these waters
that give us our very lives in you.
We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Crucified and Risen One.

C Amen.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Holy God, We Praise Your Name

ELW#414



1 Ho - ly God, we praise your name; Lord of all, we
 2 Hark! The glad ce - les - tial hymn an - gel choirs a -
 3 Lo, the ap - os - tol - ic train join your sa - cred
 4 Ho - ly Fa - ther, ho - ly Son, Ho - ly Spir - it,



bow be - fore you. All on earth your scep - ter claim,
 bow are rais - ing; cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim,
 name to hal - low; proph - ets swell the glad re - frain,
 three we name you, though in es - sence on - ly one;



all in heav'n a - bove a - dore you. In - fi - nite your
 in un - ceas - ing cho - rus prais - ing, fill the heav'ns with
 and the white - robed mar - tyrs fol - low; and from morn to
 un - di - vid - ed God we claim you and, a - dor - ing,



vast do - main, ev - er - last - ing is your reign.
 sweet ac - cord: "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord!"
 set of sun through the church the song goes on.
 bend the knee while we own the mys - ter - y.

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 of peace, you brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great shepherd of the sheep. By the blood of your eternal covenant, make us complete in everything good that we may do your will, and work among us all that is well-pleasing in your sight, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever..

C Amen.

(please be seated)

WELCOME THE CHILDREN

Gathering • Word • Meal • Sending

Word

FIRST READING

Acts 9:36-43

Dorcas was a faithful and devoted woman of charity in the community of Joppa. Her kindness and her work with clothing were well-known, especially to the widows in town. When she fell ill and died, Peter raised her back to life through the power of prayer.

³⁶ Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. ³⁷ At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs.

³⁸ Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay." ³⁹ So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. ⁴⁰ Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹ He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. ⁴² This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³ Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

P The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 23

¹ The Lord | is my shepherd;

I shall not | be in want.

² The Lord makes me lie down | in green pastures
and leads me be- | side still waters.

³ You restore my | soul, O Lord,
and guide me along right pathways | for your name's sake.

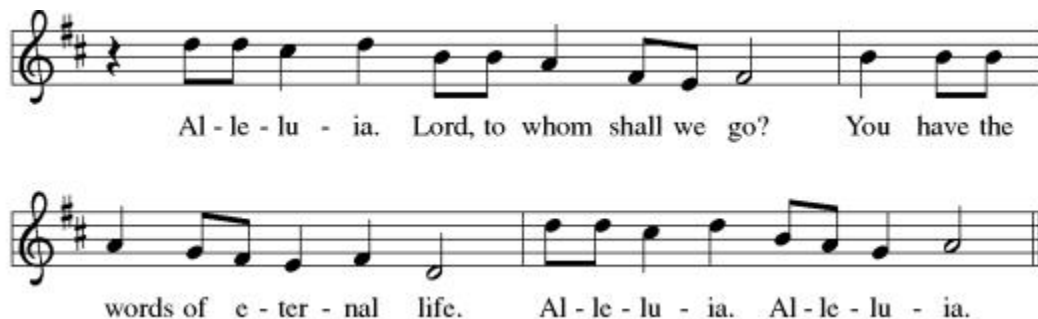
⁴ Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall | fear no
evil;

for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they | comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence | of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is | running over.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days | of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the | Lord forever.

(please stand, as able)
GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



P The Holy Gospel according to John.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL

John 10:22-30

Jesus responds to questions about his identity with the remarkable claim that he and the Father are one. Those who understand this are his sheep; they hear his voice, follow, and will never be snatched from his hand.

²² At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. ²⁴ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly." ²⁵ Jesus answered, "I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; ²⁶ but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ The Father and I are one."

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

The Lord's My Shepherd

ELW#778



1 The Lord's my shep-herd; I'll not want. He makes me down to lie
2 My soul he doth re - store a - gain, and me to walk doth make
3 Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale, yet will I fear no ill;
4 My ta - ble thou hast rich - ly spread in pres - ence of my foes;
5 Good - ness and mer - cy all my life shall sure - ly fol - low me,



in pas - tures green; he lead - eth me the qui - et wa - ters by.
with - in the paths of righ - teous - ness, e'en for his own name's sake;
for thou art with me, and thy rod and staff me com - fort still;
my head thou dost with oil a - noint, and my cup o - ver - flows.
and in God's house for - ev - er - more my dwell - ing - place shall be;



He lead - eth me, he lead - eth me the qui - et wa - ters by.
with - in the paths of righ - teous - ness, e'en for his own name's sake.
for thou art with me, and thy rod and staff me com - fort still.
My head thou dost with oil a - noint, and my cup o - ver - flows.
and in God's house for - ev - er - more my dwell - ing - place shall be.

APOSTLES CREED (10:30 A.M.)

**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 God of resurrection and new life, we come before you in prayer for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

You guide your people to the waters of life. Make your church a nourishing place for all who are thirsty for hope and healing. Renew us in the waters of baptism, and send us forth as signs of your love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You tend to the earth, sustaining life in all places. Revive fragile ecosystems and restore species in danger of extinction. Teach us new ways of living in balance and harmony with our non-human neighbors. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You lead all peoples along right pathways. Grant wisdom and compassion to judges, lawyers, mediators, and legal advocates. Dismantle systems of mass incarceration, empower processes of restorative justice, and encourage all who strive for healing in our communities. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You wipe the tears from every eye. Tend to all who struggle with anxiety or depression, loneliness, or despair. Enfold all who are in any need in your shepherding care (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

This Mother's Day, bless mothers, grandmothers, and all who offer mothering care. Come close to those whose relationships with their families are difficult, and console all who grieve the loss of mother figures or the loss of children. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You are the source of everlasting life. In deep gratitude for all your saints (*especially*), we rejoice in the joy and hope of the resurrection made known to us in Jesus, your beloved child. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

P We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

C Amen.

Gathering • Word • Meal • Sending

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 a gift electronically.



OFFERTORY ANTHEM

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

Chancel Choir

(please stand, as able)

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right
spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take
not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-store to me the joy of
your sal-va-tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir-it.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A Risen One,
you have gathered us around your table of grace
along with these gifts we bring.
Come among us again,
breathe your life into us,
and enliven us with this meal,

C Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

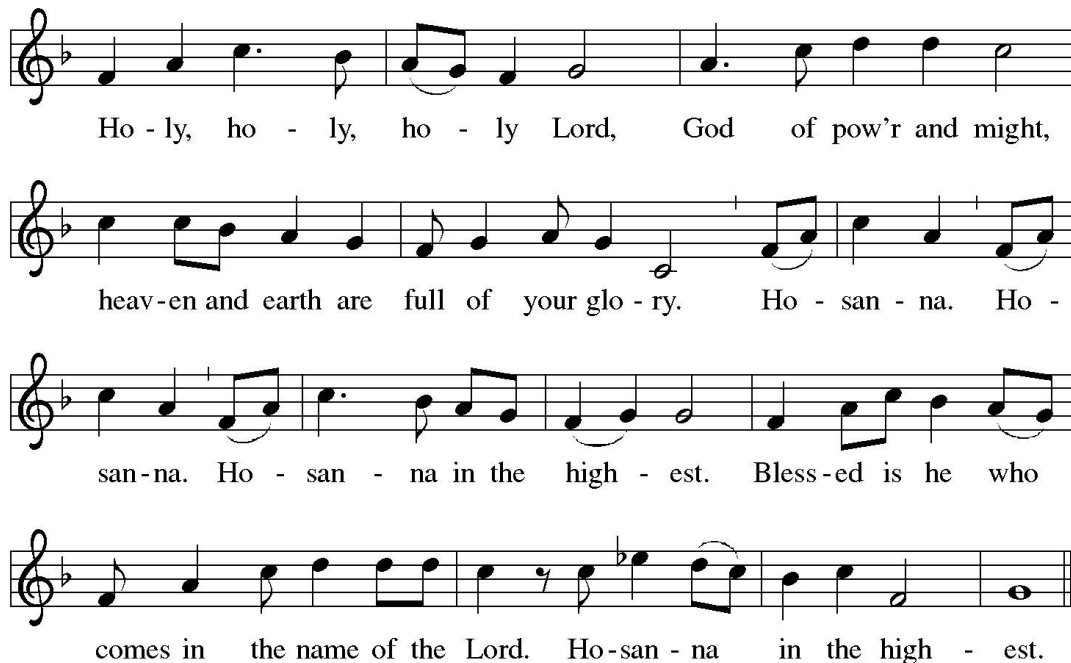
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE 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:

SANCTUS *Holy, Holy, Holy*



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. 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.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
you have brought us this far along the way.

In times of bitterness you did not abandon us,
but guided us into the path of love and light.

In every age you sent prophets
to make known your loving will for all humanity.

The cry of the poor has become your own cry;
our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire.

In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant
to preach good news to the afflicted,
to break bread with the outcast and despised,
and to ransom those in bondage to prejudice and sin.

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 all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection,
we await the day when Jesus shall return
to free all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death.
Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen.

Amen.

Send your Holy Spirit, our advocate,
to fill the hearts of all who share this bread and cup
with courage and wisdom to pursue love and justice in all the world.
Come, Spirit of freedom! And let the church say, Amen.

Amen.

Join our prayers and praise with your prophets and martyrs of every age,
that, rejoicing in the hope of the resurrection,
we might live in the freedom and hope of your Son.
Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Come to the table of grace. Receive the gift of new life.

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.

DISTRIBUTION*Now The Green Blade Rises*

ELW#379



1 Now the green blade ris - es from the bur - ied grain,
2 In the grave they laid him, love by ha - tred slain,
3 Forth he came at Eas - ter like the ris - en grain,
4 When our hearts are win - try, griev - ing, or in pain,



wheat that in dark earth man - y days has lain;
think - ing that he would nev - er wake a - gain,
he that for three days in the grave had lain;
your touch can call us back to life a - gain,



love lives a - gain, that with the dead has been;
laid in the earth like grain that sleeps un - seen;
raised from the dead, my liv - ing Lord is seen;
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;



love is come a - gain like wheat a - ris - ing green.

(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 Living One,
in this feast you have made yourself known to us.
Send us now to tell of your wonders,
sing of your glory,
and proclaim your risen life
to a wounded and weary world.

C Amen.

Gathering • Word • Meal • Sending

Sending

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

BLESSING

P The triune God,
who was, who is, and who is to come,
Sovereign, † Savior, and Spirit,
light your way with resurrection dawn,
now and always.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

Love Devine, All Love Excelling

ELW#631



1 Love di-vine, all loves ex-cel-ling, Joy of heav'n, to
2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov-ing Spir-it in-to ev-'ry
3 Come, Al-might-y, to de-liv-er; let us all thy
4 Fin-ish then thy new cre-a-tion, pure and spot-less



earth come down! Fix in us thy hum-ble dwell-ing, all thy
trou-bled breast; let us all in thee in-her-it; let us
life re-ceive; sud-den-ly re-turn, and nev-er, nev-er-
let us be; let us see thy great sal-va-tion per-fect-



faith-ful mer-cies crown. Je-sus, thou art all com-pas-sion,
find thy prom-ised rest. Take a-way the love of sin-ning;
more thy tem-ples leave. Thee we would be al-ways bless-ing,
ly re-stored in thee! Changed from glo-ry in-to glo-ry,



pure, un-bound-ed love thou art; vis-it us with
Al-pha and O-me-ga be; end of faith, as
serve thee as thy hosts a-bove, pray, and praise thee
till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our



thy sal-va-tion, en-ter ev-'ry trem-bling heart.
its be-gin-ning, set our hearts at lib-er-ty.
with-out ceas-ing, glo-ry in thy per-fect love.
crowns be-fore thee, lost in won-der, love, and praise!

DISMISSAL

A Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. In Christ you are made new. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

POSTLUDE

Bethel's Staff

Lead Pastor: The Rev. Peter I. Ray

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: Kelley Valentine & Cathy Tallman

Church Administrator: Cathy Tallman

Custodian: Jennifer Horvath

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

Retired Visitation Pastor: The Rev. Wil Hallman

Retired/Resource Pastors:

The Rev. Andrew Mazak

The Rev. Joe Stark

The Rev. Joy Miller

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."