

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Nurture with Love, Serve with Hope
SEPTEMBER 17, 2023 PASTOR ELAINA SALMON

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

(Please stand.)

THE GATHERING

Confession and Forgiveness

P Blessed be God,
the one who forms us,
Jesus who bears the cross,
the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

C **Amen.**

P Let us bow before God in humility,
confessing our sin.

(a moment of silence)

P Steadfast and faithful God,
C **you have revealed the ways of justice,
yet we fail to follow you.
We are overwhelmed
by the world's violence and suffering.
We are afraid to risk what we have
for the sake of others.
For the harm we have caused,
known and unknown, forgive us.
For the unjust demands we place on others
and your creation, forgive us.
For the ways we turn away
from you and our neighbor, forgive us.
Lead us back to you
and set us on the right path;
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.**

P Beloved in Christ,
God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.
God's compassion is beyond compare.
In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.
In Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

C **Amen.**

Gathering Song *“When We Are Living”*

*When we are living, it is in Christ Jesus,
and when we're dying, it is in the Lord.
Both in our living and in our dying,
we belong to God, we belong to God.*

*'Mid times of sorrow and in times of pain,
when sensing beauty or in love's embrace,
whether we suffer, or sing rejoicing,
we belong to God, we belong to God.*

*Across this wide world, we shall always find
those who are crying with no peace of mind;
and when we help them, or when we feed them,
we belong to God, we belong to God.*

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.**

Hymn of Praise *“Open My Eyes”*

*Open my eyes, Lord. Help me to see your face.
Open my eyes, Lord. Help me to see.*

*Open my ears, Lord. Help me to hear your voice.
Open my ears, Lord. Help me to hear.*

*Open my heart, Lord. Help me to love like you.
Open my heart, Lord. Help me to love.*

*And the first shall be last, and our eyes are opened,
and we'll hear like never before. And we'll speak in new ways,
and we'll see God's face in places we've never known.*

*I live within you, deep in your heart, O Love.
I live within you. Rest now in me.*

Prayer of the Day

P O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

(Please be seated.)

THE WORD

The First Reading Genesis 50:15-21

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

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

Psalm 103

- A Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.
C **Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all God's benefits—**
- A who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases;
C **who redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;**
- A who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.
C **O LORD, you provide vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.**
- A You made known your ways to Moses
and your works to the children of Israel.
C **LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**
- A you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.
C **You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**
- A For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.
C **As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**

A As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

The Second Reading Romans 14:1-12

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

A The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

(Please stand.)

Gospel Acclamation

*Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia
Your words, O Lord, are Spirit and Life;
You have the words of everlasting life.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia*

Gospel Matthew 18:21-35

Peter came and said to Jesus, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ And out of pity for

him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

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

(Please be seated.)

Sermon **Rev. Elaina Salmon**

(Please stand.)

Hymn of the Day "*Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer*"

*Guide me ever, great Redeemer,
pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but you are mighty;
hold me with your pow'rful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
feed me now and evermore,
feed me now and evermore.*

*Open now the crystal fountain
where the healing waters flow;
let the fire and cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through.
Strong deliv'rer, strong deliv'rer,
shield me with your mighty arm,
shield me with your mighty arm.*

*When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side.
Songs and praises, songs and praises,
I will raise forevermore,
I will raise forevermore.*

Prayers of the People

A Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

(a moment of silence)

A We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood. Merciful God,
C **receive our prayer.**

A We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and healing to rivers clogged with pollution. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger. Merciful God,
C **receive our prayer.**

A We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in positions of power to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle. Merciful God,
C **receive our prayer.**

A We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, the disease of addiction, or otherwise afraid or in harm's way. We pray especially for. Protect all who cry out for mercy. Merciful God,
C **receive our prayer.**

A We pray for this congregation. Open our hearts to practice intentional invitation. Help us to forgive each other, practice patience, and choose welcome over judgment. Move us to care for those in our community seeking refuge and safety. Merciful God,
C **receive our prayer.**

A We give thanks for the saints who died in faith. Show us how to live faithfully, creatively, and lovingly in your church and world. Merciful God,
C **receive our prayer.**

A Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.
C **Amen.**

Sharing of Christ's Peace

P The peace of Christ be with you always.
C **And also with you.**

(You may share the sign of peace using jazz hands, a peace sign, or by bowing to one another. Please stay in your seats to do so.)

(Please be seated.)

THE MEAL

Invitation to the Offering

P Our offering is an act of worship. With our gifts we express our love for God and for our neighbor. Come, let us worship, let us love, in Christ's name.

Offering

(Our offering is an act of worship and thanksgiving for all God has first given us. Our gifts support the mission of the church to "nurture with love and serve with hope.")
(Please stand.)

Offering Song "In the Singing"

*In the singing, in the silence,
in the hands expectant, open,
in the blessing, in the breaking,
in your presence at this table,*

Refrain

*Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ,
be the wine of grace;
Jesus, Christ, Jesus Christ,
be the bread of peace.*

*In the question, in the answer,
in the moment of acceptance,
in the heart's cry, in the healing,
in the circle of your people, Refrain*

Offertory Prayer

A God of power, God of plenty,
all things belong to you.
We bring your gifts to the table,
that all might be fed.
Form us into the body of your Beloved,
Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C **Amen.**

Eucharistic Prayer

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.**

P Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever.

C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

P 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, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

P Jesus invites you to this table.
Come, eat and live.

(Please be seated.)

Communion Distribution

Worshippers are invited forward to receive bread and wine (red) or grape juice (white) from our worship leaders. Those on east side of the sanctuary will commune first followed by those on the west side. To avoid walking through the PrayGround, those on the east side should return to their seat via the center aisle.

Communion Songs

“Lamb of God”

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world. Have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world. Have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world. Grant us peace.*

“When Peace Like a River”

*When peace like a river attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll,
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
it is well, it is well with my soul.*

Refrain

*It is well (it is well)
with my soul, (with my soul,)
it is well, it is well with my soul.*

*Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
let this blest assurance control,
that Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
and has shed his own blood for my soul. Refrain*

*He lives--oh, the bliss of this glorious thought;
my sin, not in part, but the whole,
is nailed to his cross and I bear it no more.
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul! Refrain*

*Lord, hasten the day when our faith shall be sight,
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
the trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend;
even so it is well with my soul. Refrain*

(Please stand.)

Communion Blessing

P May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his
 grace.
C **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

- A Blessed be your name, O God,
for we have feasted on your Word,
Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts.
Strengthened by this food,
send us to gather the world to your banquet,
where none are left out and all are satisfied.
In Jesus' name we pray.
- C **Amen.**

SENDING

Blessing

- P The God of glory,
Jesus Christ, name above all names,
and the Spirit who lives in you,
bless you now and forever.
- C **Amen.**

Sending Song "In Thee is Gladness"

*In thee is gladness amid all sadness,
Jesus, sunshine of my heart.
By thee are given the gifts of heaven,
thou the true redeemer art.
Our souls thou wakest; our bonds thou breakest.
Who trusts thee surely has built securely
and stands forever: Alleluia!
Our hearts are pining to see thy shining,
dying or living, to thee are cleaving;
naught can us sever: Alleluia!*

*Jesus is ours! We fear no powers,
not of earth or sin or death.
He sees and blesses in worst distresses;
he can change them with a breath.
Wherefore the story tell of his glory
with heart and voices; all heav'n rejoices
in him forever: Alleluia!
We shout for gladness, triumph o'er sadness,
love him and praise him and still shall raise him
glad hymns forever: Alleluia!*

Dismissal

- P Go in peace to nurture with love and serve with hope.
- C **Thanks be to God!**

PRAYERS FOR THE COMMUNITY

EJ Ahlberg	Nancy Iwan	Ken Rose
Rev. Glenn Bergmark	Monica Johnson	Frank Roy
MariLynn Bergmark	Zeplyn Killmer	Joseph Rymkey
Sharon Bolerjack	Peyton Kirk	Ben Sabourin
Yvonne Borkhuis	Lenny Kobilca	Joe Sanfillipo
Scott Browne	Rev. John Lang	George Scheel
Gary Cobbett	Nancy Lang	Bernie Schroeder
Bill Cochran	Dan Lipowski	Tim Schroeder
Louise Crapil	Sue Lucheon	Virginia Schroeder
Beau Dowling	Scott Lundgren	Jeff Shepro
Finley Engnell	Bill Lynch	Sharon Skopec
Laura Erickson	Dede Machowski	Gene Sobba
Elwood Faulhaber	Jim McKeever	Gary Sperka
Judy Faulhaber	Ruth Ann Miller	Dom Thielmann
Janice George	Omni Rook Myers	Chuck Vlcek
David Gilchrist	Linda Nelson	Martha Walsh
Liz Hawkinson	Dave Nommenson	Kyle Williams
Marie Heeren	Dana Pitlik	Justin Wormsley
Mike Hoffman	Charlotte Pohlman	Stephanie Wormsley
Sanala Hudson		

For Sean Acosta, Dustin Johnson, Steve Kleinfelder, Damen McDermott, Chad Peters, Mitch Pohlman and all others serving our country and their families.

For those we name in our hearts, and for those who have not yet found Jesus.

Acknowledgements

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When We Are Living Text: st. 1, based on Romans 14:8; tr. Elise S. Eslinger, b. 1942 st. 2-3, Roberto Escamilla, b. 1931; tr. George Lockwood, b. 1946

Open My Eyes, Lord Text: Verses 1-3 text, Jesse Manibusan; verse 4 text, Kelly Cullen, OFM. Text and music © 1988 Spirit & Song

Gospel Acclamation "Alleluia" from Mass of Christ the Savior by Dan Shutte

Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer Text: William Williams, 1717-1791; tr. William Williams and Peter Williams, 1722-1796, alt.

In the Singing Text: Shirley Erena Murray, b. 1931 Text © 1996 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Lamb of God from Mass of Christ the Savior by Dan Shutte

When Peace Like a River Text: Horatio G. Spafford, 1828-1888

In Thee is Gladness Text: Johann Lindemann, 1549-1631; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

SERVING TODAY — Pam Laasch

MUSICIANS — Sandy Doebert, Sue Gray and Shawn Salmon

TECH CREW — Gary Gray, Sue Gray and Zach Howell

WORSHIP WALK - IMPORTANT UPDATE

Due to a festival at the Forge on Saturday that will likely make parking challenging, we will change the location for our Worship Walk.

On September 24 at 4:00pm our worship walk will be at Waterfall Glen. Please use the waterfall parking lot, on the south side of Bluff Road between Cass and Route 83. Hike will be 1-1.5 miles and will include some hills/inclines. Hope to see you there!

ELECTRONIC GIVING is available to support Bethany Church. It is fast, easy and secure. You can schedule a weekly or monthly contribution that is automatically debited from your savings or checking account. Make a one-time donation to a special fund; even direct the gift in honor or in memory of someone. Visit our website: bethanylemont.org and click the Donate button on the homepage.

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