

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH <i>Nurture with Love, Serve with Hope</i> SEPTEMBER 27, 2026 PASTOR ELAINA SALMON
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Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

(Please stand.)

THE GATHERING

Gathering Song *“There Is a Longing in Our Hearts”*

Refrain

*There is a longing in our hearts, O Lord,
for you to reveal yourself to us.*

*There is a longing in our hearts for love
we only find in you, our God.*

*For justice, for freedom,
for mercy: hear our prayer.*

*In sorrow, in grief:
be near; hear our prayer, O God. Refrain*

*For wisdom, for courage,
for comfort: hear our prayer.*

*In weakness, in fear:
be near; hear our prayer, O God. Refrain*

*For healing, for wholeness,
for new life: hear our prayer.*

*In sickness, in death:
be near; hear our prayer, O God. Refrain*

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 “Christ, Be Our Light”

*Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.*

*Refrain
Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*

*Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
signs of your kingdom come. Refrain*

Prayer of the Day

P God of wisdom, you remember the rise and fall of every empire, dynasties certain there wouldn't be enough, and the collective good suppressed. When our memory is short, call us back into your ancient story and re-member us to your sacred economy, through Jesus Christ, our liberation and life. Amen.

C **Amen.**

(Please be seated.)

THE WORD

Children's Sermon

The First Reading Exodus 1:1-14

These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. The total number of people born to Jacob was seventy. (Joseph was already in Egypt.) Then Joseph died, and all his brothers, and that whole generation. But the Israelites were fruitful and prolific; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.

Now a new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, “Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and

escape from the land.” Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. The Egyptians subjected the Israelites to hard servitude and made their lives bitter with hard servitude in mortar and bricks and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

A The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 25

A To you, O Lord,
I lift up my soul.

C **My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

A Let none who look to you be put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

C **Show me your ways, O Lord,
and teach me your paths.**

A Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

C **Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.**

A Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O Lord.

C **You are gracious and upright, O Lord;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

A You lead the lowly in justice
and teach the lowly your way.

(Please stand.)

Gospel Acclamation “*For Such a Time as This*”

*Could it be (could it be) that we are called
for such a time as this?*

*Could it be (could it be) that we are called
for such a time as this?*

Gospel Matthew 21:23-32

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.” So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him.”

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 “O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

*O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast,
and our eternal home:*

*Under the shadow of your throne
your saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is your arm alone,
and our defense is sure.*

*Before the hills in order stood
or earth received its frame,
from everlasting you are God,
to endless years the same.*

*A thousand ages in your sight
are like an evening gone,
short as the watch that ends the night
before the rising sun.*

(Please be seated.)

Baptism and Welcome of New Members

P Dear siblings in Christ, today we have multiple celebrations as we baptize Holly Benson and welcome new members: Vicki and Gary Cobbett; Morgan Cortez and Arturo Almaraz; Karen Michaelsen; Sandi, Mike, Delaney and Donovan Moleski; Rachel, Andrew and Emma Santillo. Today we gather around the font and the promises of God who claims us in baptismal waters. God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ and anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.

I ask that Holly and her parents and sponsors and all of our New Members to stand to profess your faith together.

P I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church. Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

Parents/Sponsors/New Members I renounce them.

P Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

Parents/Sponsors/New Members I renounce them.

P Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

Parents/Sponsors/New Members I renounce them.

P Do you believe in God the Father?

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

P Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

C 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 into hell. 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.

P Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

C 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.

P You may be seated. I invite Holly, her parents, and sponsors to come forward.

Sponsors We present Holly Benson for baptism.

P Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have Holly baptized into Christ?

Parents We do.

P As you bring your child to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:
to live with her among God's faithful people,
bring her to the word of God and the holy supper,
teach her the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments,
place in her hands the holy scriptures, and nurture her in faith and prayer, so that Holly may learn to trust God,
proclaim Christ through word and deed,
care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace.

P Do you promise to help Holly grow in the Christian faith and life?

Parents We do.

P Sponsors, do you promise to support Holly and pray for her in her new life in Christ?

Sponsors We do.

P People of God, do you promise to pray for Holly in her new life in Christ?

C We do.

P We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you.

P Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that those who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever

C Amen.

P Holly, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

P Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your daughters and sons new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life. Sustain Holly with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding,

the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

C Amen.

P Holly, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.

P Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

P Let us welcome Holly.

C **We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share. Join us in giving thanks and praise to God. Together let us bear God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.**

We Welcome You Dear Child of God

First time: choir
Second time: congregation

The musical score is written on three staves in 3/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a 3/4 time signature. It contains a whole rest followed by a half note G4, then a quarter note A4, and a half note Bb4. The second staff continues with a quarter note C5, a half note D5, a quarter note E5, a half note F5, a quarter note G5, a half note A5, and a quarter note Bb5. The third staff begins with a quarter note C6, a half note D6, a quarter note E6, a half note F6, a quarter note G6, a half note A6, and a quarter note Bb6. The lyrics are: 'We wel - come you dear child of God come share our home come share our love for in the Lord we're a fam - i - ly we wel - come you, We...'

We wel - come you dear child of God come

share our home come share our love for in the Lord we're a

fam - i - ly we wel - come you, We...

Written for Bethany Lutheran Church by R. Steiger (1996)

Reception of New Members

P I invite our new members to come forward.

Our life of faith started with our baptism, where God's welcome, grace and forgiveness was poured over our heads and our lives. We return to these baptismal waters throughout our life of faith to remember who and whose we are and to look to who we are still called to be. Today, we joyfully welcome and receive these new members into our community of faith. Together we will share this journey of seeking God and living out our baptismal promises.

Let us pray.

Merciful God, we thank you that you have made us your own by water and the Word in baptism. You have called us to yourself, enlightened us with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished us in the community of faith. Uphold us and all your servants in the gifts and promises of baptism, and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth. We ask this in the name of Christ.

C Amen.

P Sisters and brothers, you have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:
to live among God's faithful people,
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

If so, please respond - *I do, and I ask God to help and guide me*

New Members **I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.**

P People of God, do you promise to support our sisters and brothers and pray for them in their life in Christ?

C We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.

P We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in *(New member name)* the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

C Amen.

P Let us rejoice with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

C We rejoice with you in the life of baptism. Together we will give thanks and praise to God and proclaim the good news to all the world!

Song "Halle, Halle, Hallelujah" #172

Halle, halle, hallelujah.

Halle, halle, hallelujah.

Halle, halle, hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

(Please stand.)

Prayers of the People

A Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

(a moment of silence)

A Center your church in humility as we strive to follow in your way. Help us listen to the cries of those who have been unfairly hurt by the church and dare to name difficult truths. Show all your love. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A You call us to care for your creation. Lead us into your promise of a better world through sustainable practices and respect for your handiwork. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A Inspire all in positions of authority to act honorably. Remind them of their call to use their authority for the sake of the common good. Give them the gift of humility. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A Comfort those who come before you in fear and trembling. Calm troubled hearts with your forgiveness. Help all those in need. Grant us your salvation. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A Change this congregation's heart when we say no to your call. Open us to courageous learning and service in our community, especially in new or challenging places. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A Your steadfast love holds all the saints who have finished their work and are at rest. As we grieve, remind us of your mercy so we may also give thanks. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

C **Amen.**

Sharing of Christ's Peace

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

(Please be seated.)

THE MEAL

Invitation to the Offering

P Whether we have much or only a little, we can share our daily bread so that all will be fed. As we have received, so now we give, in the vineyard of the Lord.

Offering

(Please stand.)

Offertory Song “Touch the Earth Lightly”

*Touch the earth lightly,
use the earth gently,
nourish the life of the world in our care:
gift of great wonder,
ours to surrender,
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.*

*Let there be greening,
birth from the burning,
water that blesses, and air that is sweet,
health in God's garden,
hope in God's children,
regeneration that peace will complete.*

Offertory Prayer

A Lord, you open your hand and bless us again and again.
May your abundance shape our hearts
so that we may hold loosely and live generously.
Do your good work of life and liberation through the gifts we offer now.
In Jesus' name we pray.

C **Amen.**

Eucharistic Prayer

P This is an altar where we worship
the One who provides for creation,
who gathers all people and nations
together, one dynasty everlasting.

And. This is a table where we flock
from the fields humble and hungry,

empty hands open and hoping
there is enough and we are enough.
Let us pray.

P God is here.

C **God's Spirit is with us.**

P Lift up your hearts.

C **We lift them up to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P Blessed are you, O Creator.
You carve rivers and nourish the soil,
rain down manna from heaven
and burst fresh water from stones.

Blessed are you, O Christ.
You tend the flock and find lost sheep,
bless the bread and break it
feeding the whole world with love.

Blessed are you, O Holy Spirit.
You fill our lungs with breath from heaven,
the same wind that stirs our faith
soars with the falcons and ibis.

On 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.

You meet us, Lord, in this bread and wine,
and with the bounty of this table
show us again the abundance of your love.
Bless the bread and wine.
And bless us to shine bright with your light.
In Jesus' name, we pray.

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 Christ invites you to this table.
All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

(Please be seated.)

Communion Distribution

Communion Songs

"Lamb of God"

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.

“Abide with Me”

*Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
help of the helpless, oh, abide with me.*

*Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
change and decay in all around I see;
O thou who changest not, abide with me.*

*I need thy presence ev'ry passing hour;
what but thy grace can foil the tempter's pow'r?
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me.*

*I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;
ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou abide with me!*

*Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes,
shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;
heav'n's morning breaks,
and earth's vain shadows flee;
in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.*

(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 We give you thanks, O God,
 for in this meal you have turned us
 from hunger toward satisfaction
 from taking toward trusting
 from empire's meager rations
 toward daily bread from heaven.
 May your plenty keep turning us,
 until the whole world is turned toward love,
 through Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life.
C **Amen.**

SENDING

Blessing

P May the God of your ancestors,
who was and is and is to come,
bless you now and forever.
C Amen.

Sending Song “Praise the One who Breaks the Darkness”

*Praise the One who breaks the darkness
with a liberating light;
praise the One who frees the pris'ners,
turning blindness into sight.
Praise the One who preached the gospel,
healing ev'ry dread disease,
calming storms and feeding thousands
with the very bread of peace.*

*Praise the One who blessed the children
with a strong yet gentle word;
praise the One who drove out demons
with a piercing, two-edged sword.
Praise the One who brings cool water
to the desert's burning sand;
from this well comes living water
quenching thirst in ev'ry land.*

*Praise the one true love incarnate:
Christ, who suffered in our place;
Jesus died and rose for many
that we may know God by grace.
Let us sing for joy and gladness,
seeing what our God has done.
Praise the one redeeming glory;
praise the One who makes us one.*

Dismissal

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

PRAYERS FOR THE COMMUNITY

Ed Anderson	Emma Jean Howell	Omni Rook Myers
MariLynn Bergmark	Monica Johnson	Linda Nelson
Sue Blender	Pat Johnson	Dave Nommenson
Hazel Brant	Karen Jutzi	Charlotte Pohlman
Maureen Brennan	Jessica Kean	Misty Pounder
Scott Browne	Zepplyn Killmer	Brilee Robbins
Evelyn Cahill	Lenny Kobilca	Ken Rose
Tom Casey	Melanie Kohn	Frank Roy
Gary Cobbett	Carrie Koon	Ben Sabourin
Jim Connelly	Steve Lambert	Bernie Schroeder
Vicki Dieska	Rev. John Lang	Tim Schroeder
Deborah Dixon	Nancy Lang	Virginia Schroeder
Beau Dowling	Sue Lucheon	Josh Shaw
Finley Engnell	Scott Lundgren	Sharon Skopec
Elwood Faulhaber	Dede Machowski	Gene Sobba
Brian Gilchrist	Ashley Maestre	Gary Sperka
David Gilchrist	Hanna Mau	Dom Thielmann
Terri Hacker	Jim McKeever	Rick Vorel
Charlie Hagedorn	Ruth Ann Miller	Kyle Williams
Mike Hoffman	Devin Mulcahy	George Woolet

For Sean Acosta, Dustin Johnson, Steve Kleinfelder, Damen McDermott,
Chad Peters 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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O God, Our Help in Ages Past Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, alt.

Tough the Earth Lightly Text: Shirley Erena Murray, b. 1931 Text © 1992 Hope Publishing Company

Lamb of God Music: *Bread of Life*, Jeremy Young, b. 1948

Abide with Me Text: Henry F. Lyte, 1793-1847

Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness Text: Rusty Edwards, b. 1955 Text © 1987 Hope Publishing Company

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

SERVING TODAY — Pam Laasch

ACOLYTES — Edith Boyle and Madelyn Dixon

MUSICIANS — Sandy Doeber, Sue Gray and Shawn Salmon

TECH CREW — Gary Gray and Zach Howell

BAPTIZED TODAY — We welcome through holy baptism Holly Marie Benson. Holly is the daughter of Nichol and David Benson. Holly is the granddaughter of Chuck & Linda Benson and Bill & Le-Ann Roper. Holly is sponsored today by Greg Kuhn, Nate Kresica, Grace Sturtz and Michelle Tiffany.

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY AND MIXER

Following worship, join us for a New Member Mixer to greet and welcome new members into our community of faith. We will gather in the Community Room.

BIBLE STUDY

Tomorrow from 10:30am-12:30pm the monthly Bible Study will meet in the Community Room. They'll be discussing pages 191-218 in The Book of Belonging: Bible Stories for Kind and Contemplative Kids by Mariko Clark.

HARVEST FEST

The Evangelism Committee will be participating in Lemont's Harvest Festival Trunk-or-Treat on Saturday, October 10. They're looking for donations of Halloween candy to distribute to children. Please have donations to church by October 4. Thank you!

PICTURE DIRECTORY

Bethany would like to put together a picture directory for our faith community so that we can nurture connections. Please send a picture to bethanylmt@aol.com to be included. This can be a formal picture done by a photographer or an informal picture taken from your phone.

DONATIONS TO THE OPEN PANTRY were given by Lemont Garden Club, Christ Community Church, Adrian Zeglin, Marie & Doug DeGregorio and Joseph Zuzich.

MUSIC AVAILABLE

If a hymn number is listed with a song, you can find the music in the red hymnal in your pew. We have packets available at the back table that include the songs for the day.

ELECTRONIC GIVING is available to support Bethany Lutheran 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.