

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

September 14, 2025
Sunday 10:00 a.m.



Welcome to All! We are glad that you are able to worship with us today. **Please fill out a connection card in the pews if you like.** During the service, we will sit or stand in reverence to our Lord. Please do what is physically comfortable and reverent for you. For those who are unable to receive Communion near the altar and wish to have the Pastor administer it at your seat, please obtain a red and white card from one of the ushers and hold it up at Communion time to alert the Pastor. If you or a little one would like to receive a blessing instead of Holy Communion, we invite you to come forward and cross your arms at the time of Communion. Please feel free to introduce yourself to our Pastor and fill in your name, address, etc in the guest book near the entrance to the sanctuary.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship – Setting 4, page 147

Bell Ringing/Welcome/Announcements

Prelude

GATHERING

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, our maker, our helper, and our keeper.

C: Amen.

P: Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination

P: Merciful and loving God,

C: ...we are your stiff-necked people. We trample on the needy. We grumble about your grace to others. We turn away from the poor. Have mercy on us and forgive our sins. Rejoice over us as ones who were lost and have been found. Amen.

P: Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. You who were lost have been found. In the name of † Jesus, your sins are forgiven! **C: Amen.**

Greeting

A: 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.**

Kyrie



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



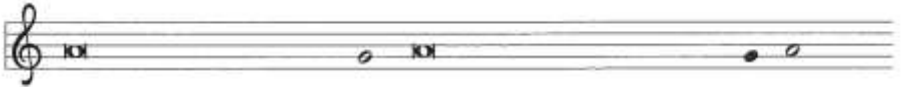
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



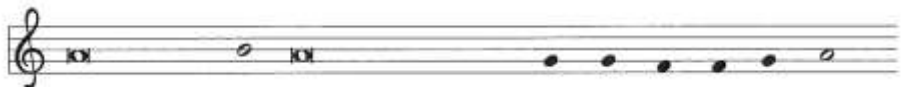
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,

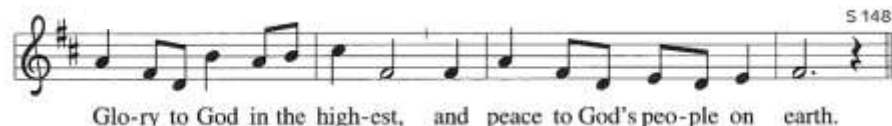
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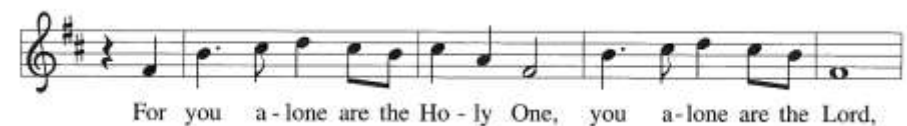
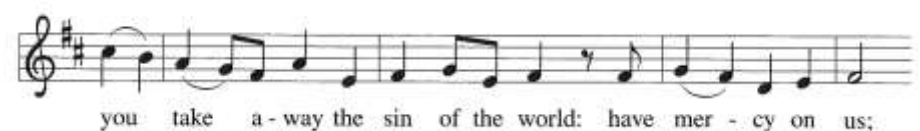
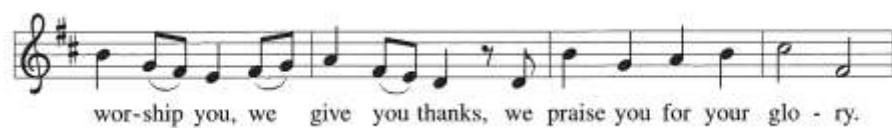
Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

Hymn of Praise

Glory to God



All
Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa-ther, we





Prayer of the Day

A: The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

A: Let us pray together... **C: O God, overflowing with mercy and compassion, you lead back to yourself all those who go astray.**

Preserve your people in your loving care, that we may reject whatever is contrary to you and may follow all things that sustain our life in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Children's Message

Pr. Paul

WORD

First Lesson

Exodus 32:7-14

While Moses is on Mount Sinai, the people grow restless and make a golden calf to worship. Today's reading shows Moses as the mediator between an angry God and a sinful people. Moses reminds God that the Israelites are God's own people, and boldly asks for mercy for them.

7 The Lord said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; 8 they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!' " 9 The Lord said to Moses, "I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. 10 Now let me alone so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, and of you I will make a great nation." 11 But Moses implored the Lord his God and said, "O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? 12 Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. 13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, 'I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.' "

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14 And the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

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

Psalmody

Psalms 51:1-10

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my offenses, and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.

5 Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness, a sinner from my mother's womb.

6 Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me, and would have me know wisdom deep within.

7 Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.

8 Let me hear joy and gladness; that the body you have broken may rejoice.

9 Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my wickedness.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Second Lesson

1 Timothy 1:12-17

The letters to Timothy and Titus are called the pastoral epistles because they contain advice especially intended for leaders in the church. Here the mercy shown to Paul, who once persecuted the church, is cited as evidence that even the most unworthy may become witnesses to the grace of God.

12 I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he considered me faithful and appointed me to his service, 13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. 16 But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience as an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. 17 To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

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

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia



Gospel

Luke 15:1-10

Jesus tells two stories that suggest a curious connection between the lost being found and sinners repenting. God takes the initiative to find sinners, each of whom is so precious to God that their recovery brings joy in heaven.

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

1 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to Jesus. 2 And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.” 3 So he told them this parable: 4 “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? 5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. 6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep.’ 7 Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. 8 “Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? 9 And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ 10 Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

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

Sermon

Pastor Paul Busekist

Hymn of the Day

Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus

ELW 802

Apostle's Creed

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

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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: response after each petition: **“Receive our prayer.”** (*Before prayer*) A: Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need... (*Conclusion*) P: We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend. **C: Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

MEAL

Offering / Offering Song

Zeke Clemons

Offertory

As the Grains of Wheat

ELW 465

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray together.

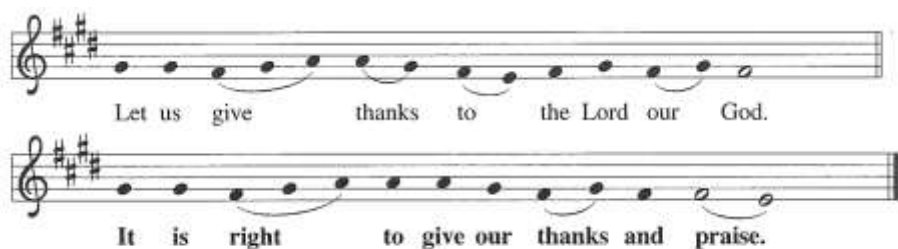
C: Lord of the harvest, we return to you a portion of what you have given to us. Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches, but on you, who richly provides for us. Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are suffering and in need, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

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

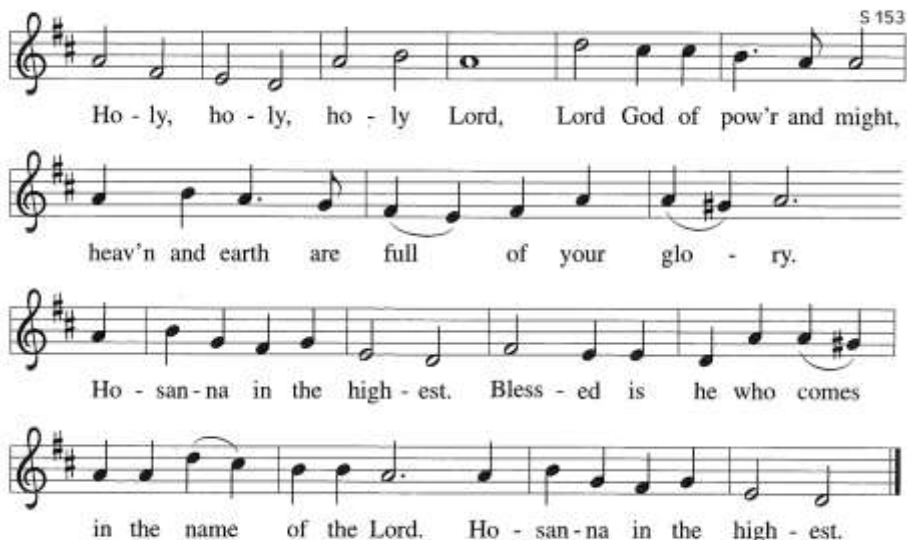
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

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P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...we praise your name and join their unending hymn...

Holy, Holy, Holy



Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer

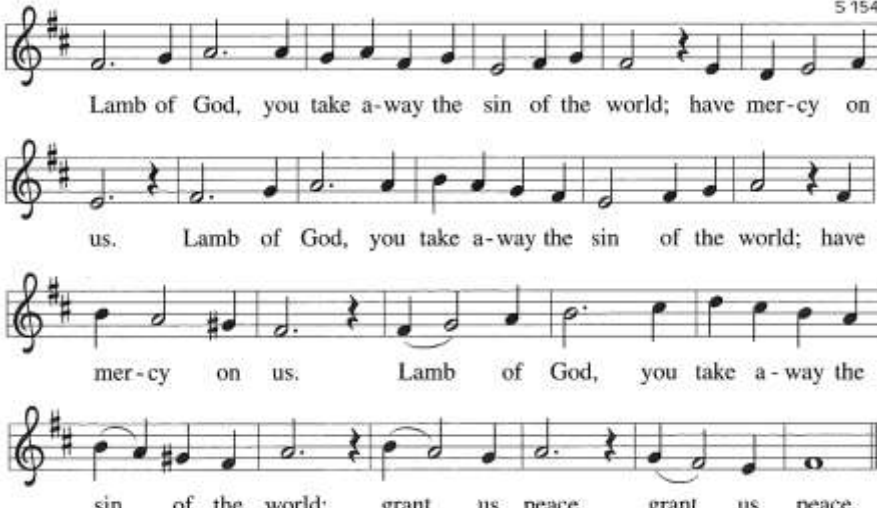
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

P: The gifts of God for the people of God. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Communion

Lamb of God

5 154



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.

Communion Hymns

*All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly
By Your Hand You Feed Your People*

*ELW 461
ELW 469*

Post-Communion Blessing

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

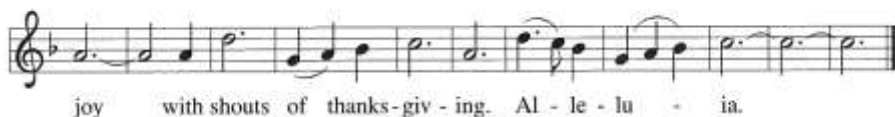
Post-Communion Canticle

Thankful Hearts



Thank-ful hearts and voic-es raise; tell ev-ry-one what God has
done. Let all who seek the Lord re-joice and bear Christ's ho-ly name.
Send us with your prom-is-es, O God, and lead us forth in

(continued on next page)



Prayer after Communion

A: Let us pray. O God, through this meal you have strengthened us and appointed us to be your servants. Send us to do good and to share our possessions with all in need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

C: Amen.

SENDING

Blessing

P: The God of righteousness, who gives justice to the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry, who sets the prisoners free, ☩ bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sending Song

Sent Forth by God's Blessing

ELW 547

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Do not lose heart.

C: Thanks be to God.



Bethlehem September 14, 2025
LUTHERAN CHURCH

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

1050 Peninsula Drive
Traverse City, MI 49686
(231) 947-9880
www.bethlehemtc.org

9/15—Cynthia Cuba

9/16—Jan Stretlien

9/19—Nancy Ammann

9/21—Makena Dohm

Sunday School and Sunday's Adult Education began their classes this morning at 9:15am. **The Wednesday Zoom Bible Study** will begin on September 17th at 1:30pm with a study of *Esther The Hidden Hand of God*

Let's Play Bunco: Cheryl Wegener will lead us in playing Bunco after church today. If you don't know how to play, that is okay, Cheryl will teach us. There will be sandwich items and beverages provided. Come have Fun and Fellowship

Worship Servants for September 14

Presiding & Preaching—Pr. Paul Busekist

Assisting Minister—Peggy Burns

Lector—Nancy Pflasterer

Musicians: David Husser, Zeke Clemons, Phil & Denise Bossardet, Pr Paul

Today's altar flowers are donated: *By Barbara Oster in Celebration of Pat Wall, Mary Ann Tanis and Jan Nelson who faithfully prepare the folders for our monthly Traditional service.*

Hospitality—Tom Fink & Deb Hissong

A/V—Barbara Oster / Paul Ton

Cookies/Coffee—Diane Cunningham / Mary Ann Tanis

Welcome Table—VOLUNTEER

Bell Ringer—Gail Goldsmith

Front Door Monitor—Kathie Bair

Altar Guild—Gail Goldsmith / Mary Ann Tanis

Counters—Carl Lehto / Forest Bowling

What IS GRIEVING? Could it be the loss of a marriage, your home, or community, good health, a dream or something else? The list can go on and on. No matter the loss you have a family here at Bethlehem that loves you, wants to support you, and be here for you! **We meet here on the first and third Mondays of the month from 3:30-4:30. The next time will be tomorrow, September 15th at 3:30pm.** If you have any questions, please contact Peggy Burns 231-392-6913.

Pr. Ruth: Our beloved friend in Christ, Pr Ruth Overdier, has some devotions in the September portion of Christ in Our Home. You can read her selections from September 16 – 30.

Third Thursday Service and Meal: Bethlehem will begin their Third Thursday Services on September 18th. There will be a light meal of deli meats and cheese sandwiches with salad, cookies and beverages at 5:45 before the 7:00 p.m. service. Come for the Fellowship before the service.

XYZ is resuming on Friday, September 26th! Please note that this is a different date than our normal second Friday, to accommodate other church activities. We will enjoy a delicious potluck lunch at 12pm, followed by a presentation by Jack Lankford, president and founder of Evergreen Community Group. Evergreen is a 501c3 nonprofit that specializes in social events for adults of any age to encourage community building. Their mission is to be a beacon of warmth, connection, and support for those feeling isolated or lonely in Northern Michigan. Their goal is to create a welcoming space where individuals can find solace, community, and an uplifting presence. XYZ stands for EXtra Years of Zest, and while originally intended to be primarily for seniors, adults of any age are encouraged to attend! The presentations would be enjoyable and informative for anyone. We hope to see you there!

The church calendar is below. Please be sure to notify the office (admin@bethlehemtc.org or 231.947.9880) to be sure that your group is of the calendar.

Sunday, September 14

9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
9:15am—Sunday School
10:00am—Traditional Worship (S)
11:30am—Bunco Party (FH)
12:30pm—Youth Discipleship Class (YR)
2:00pm—Youth Discipleship PARENT meeting (YR)

Monday, September 15

2:30pm—Choir Rehearsal (S)
3:00pm—Chair Yoga (FH)
3:30pm—Grief Group (YR)

Tuesday, September 16

Bulletin articles due today

9:00am—Property Work Group
9:00am—LWR Quilters (FH)
12:00pm—Sarah Circle (Library)
6:30pm—Council Meeting (Library)



Wednesday, September 17

11:300am—Music Rehearsal (S)
1:30pm—Zoom Bible Study (Zoom/YR)
3:00pm—Chair Yoga

Thursday, September 18

5:30pm—ACA (FH)
5:45pm—Third Thursday Meal (FH)
7:00pm—Third Thursday Service/Holden EP (S)

Friday, September 19

STAR Articles Due Today

8:00am—Radnor Race Support/Honor MI
10:00am—Sew Pieceful (FH)
1:00pm—Lehto SG (Library)
6:00pm—LifeRing Recovery Group (Library)

Saturday, September 20

8:00pm—AA (FH)

Sunday, September 21

9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
9:15am—Sunday School
10:00am—Worship Service (S)
10:00am—Installation of Council and Sunday School Staff
11:15am—Craft Show Meeting (Library)
11:15am—Fellowship Meeting (FH)