

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church
October 8, 2023
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 out one of the Visitor cards available at our Welcome Table in the Gathering Place.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship – Setting 3, page 138

Pre-Worship Music/Announcements

Prelude

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.

Silence is kept for reflection.

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 Hymn *As We Gather at Your Table* *ELW #522*

Greeting

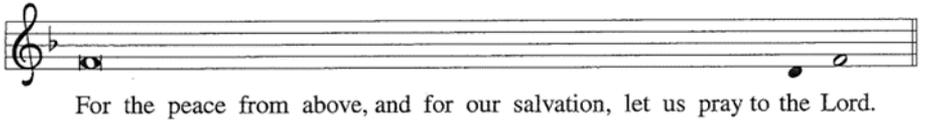
A: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C: And also with you.**

Kyrie (lead by Pastor Paul)

S 138



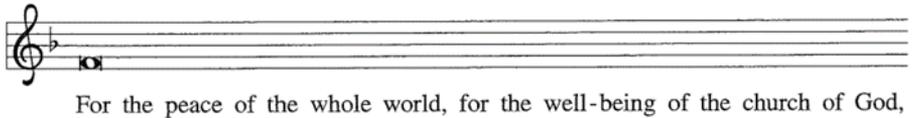
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



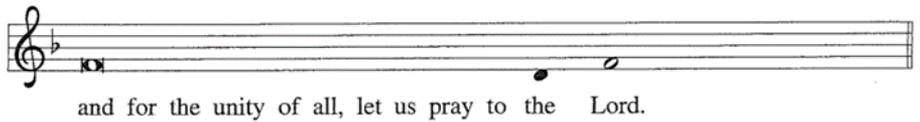
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



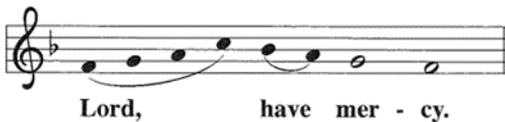
Lord, have mer - cy.



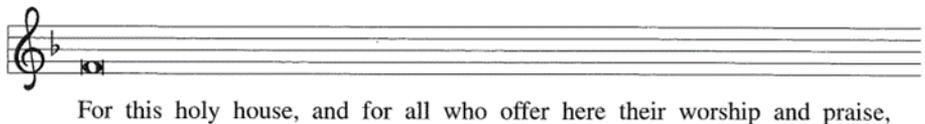
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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 worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

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

Hymn of Praise

Glory to God

Assisting minister S 139

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All

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

we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,

you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;

you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.

For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,

you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,
in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray together...

C: Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

First Lesson

Isaiah 5:1-7

The prophet sings a sad, parable-like love song about the relationship between God and Israel. In this song Israel is compared to a promising vineyard. Despite God's loving care, the vineyard that is Israel has brought forth "wild grapes" of injustice and distress, when fine grapes of justice and righteousness were expected.

1 Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. 2 He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. 3 And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. 4 What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? 5 And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. 6 I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. 7 For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

7 Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
8 You have brought a vine out of Egypt; you cast out the nations and planted it.

9 You cleared the ground for it; it took root and filled the land.
10 The mountains were covered by its shadow and the towering cedar trees by its boughs.

11 You stretched out its tendrils to the sea and its branches to the river.
12 Why have you broken down its wall, so that all who pass by pluck off its grapes?

13 The wild boar of the forest has ravaged it, and the beasts of the field have grazed upon it.
14 Turn now, O God of hosts, look down from heaven;

15 behold and tend this vine; preserve what your right hand has planted.

Second Lesson

Philippians 3:4b-14

Paul reviews some of his supposed credentials, which no longer have any bearing in comparison to the right relationship he has been given through the death of Christ. The power of Christ's resurrection motivates him to press on toward the ultimate goal, eternal life with Christ.

Paul writes: 4b If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. 7 Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. 8 More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. 10 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, 11 if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13 Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel

Matthew 21:33-46

Jesus tells a parable to the religious leaders who are plotting his death, revealing that their plans will, ironically, bring about the fulfillment of scripture.

C: ...Glory to you, O Lord

Jesus said to the people: 33 “Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. 34 When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. 35 But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. 36 Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. 37 Finally he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.’ 38 But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ 39 So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. 40 Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” 41 They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.” 42 Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes?’ 43 Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. 44 The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.” 45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. 46 They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Paul Busekist

Apostle's Creed

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: response after each petition: **“Hear our prayer.”** (*Before prayer*) A: Trusting in the transformative power of God's loving Spirit, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need. P: Gracious God, into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your unending love and amazing grace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
C: Amen.

Sharing of the Peace (*Let us give one another a sign of peace according to your comfort level.*)

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

MEAL

Offering (*Please be seated.*)

Offering Song: **Zeke Clemons**

Offertory (*Please stand, as able.*) **Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful**



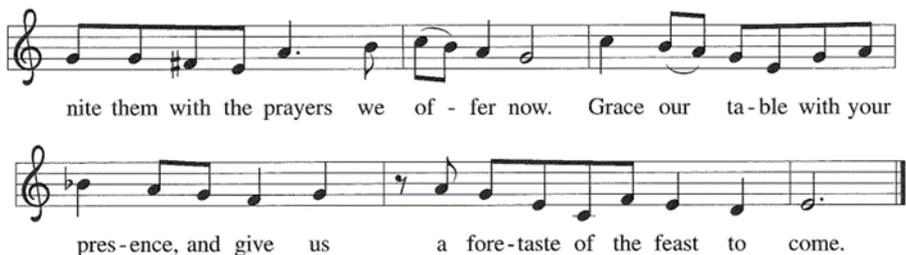
Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



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 the dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray.

C: 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. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving



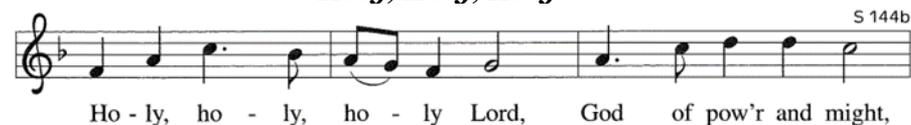
S 144a

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.

Great Thanksgiving (continued)

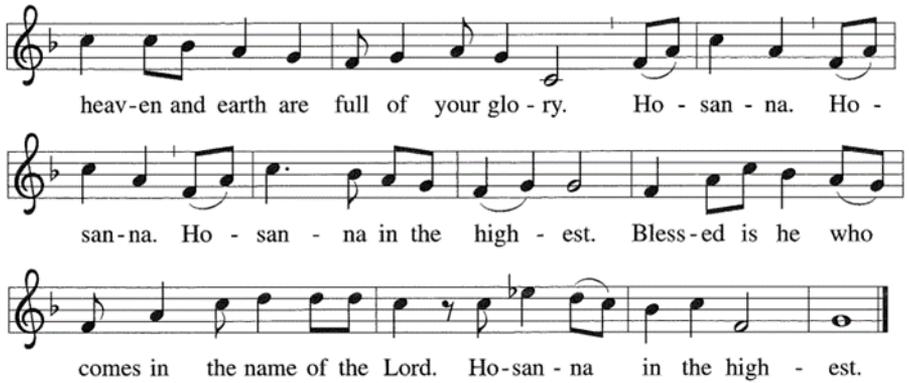
P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...we praise your name and join their unending hymn...

Holy, Holy, Holy



S 144b

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.

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.
 **Please note: *Gluten-free wafers and white grape juice are available.*

Communion

Lamb of God

S 146



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.

Communion Hymns

*The King of Love My Shepherd Is
Around You, O Lord Jesus*

ELW #502

ELW #468

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 and lead your peo - ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

Prayer after Communion

A: Let us pray. 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

God Loved the World

ELW #323

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. God is at work in you. **C: Thanks be to God.**



Bethlehem *October 8, 2023*
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

10/9—Butch Waisanen

10/12—Kay Asiala

10/13—Tom Cole

10/15—Meredith Busekist

10/15—Sally Ton

Worship Servants for October 8

Assisting Minister—Barbara Wright

Lector—Barbara Graf

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

Today's altar flowers are donated by: *The Congregation in thanks for all of God's blessings.*

A/V—Acker Family and Jim Hinds

Hospitality—Leonard and Barbara Graf

Cookies—Jacque Rossfeld

Welcome Table—Volunteer

Bell Ringer—Leonard Graf

Altar Guild—Kate Holtfreter and Barbara Oster

Tech Support—Julia Acker

Counters—Kate Holtfreter and Cindy Cuba

Building and Office Hours are: 9:00am – 2:30pm, Monday – Thursday.

DON'T MISS OUT... COME JOIN IN!!!! **Adult Education has started** and we are getting ourselves organized for a great year. We will begin by looking at each Sunday's lessons and as the year ensues... we may want to try other resources... we are open to options! You are an important part of the plan... you are an important part of the Body of Christ! Please come and see; join in the learning and sharing! We hope you will consider making this a priority!! Sunday morning from 9:15 to 9:45 in the Youth Room! See you there!! All are welcome!!! Sherri Helman

Sunday School - every Sunday at 9:15am

The next Third Thursday service will be a Holden Evening Prayer service on October 19th at 7:00pm. The service will be livestreamed.

Starting with the October 19th Third Thursday service, the BLC Fellowship Committee will be providing a light meal at 6:00 p.m. There will be sandwiches, salad and drinks. Please come early and share in fellowship and stay for the service.

New member orientation: The next gathering for new members will be **TODAY** immediately after the service. This meeting will last a little over an hour. If most can attend new members will be accepted the following Sunday during the service.

Bark (I mean, MARK!) your calendars, friends. **"Blessing of the Animals" is BACK – TODAY, October 8th at 2:15pm** on the west lawn of Bethlehem. Feel free to bring your dog, cat, turtle or other pet to be blessed with a little music and a message of love and thankfulness to God for how they bring goodness to our lives each day!

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH ART & CRAFT SHOW - SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2023 9:00am to 3:00pm

Featuring over 40 local artists and crafters with original, handmade goods! Please sign up in the Narthex hallway to volunteer for our fundraiser. Your help would be greatly appreciated. "Many hands make work light".

Counters are needed! Jim Monroe is looking for offering counters for the calendar year of 2024. Counters will be assigned for a month at a time. Depending on the number of volunteers, it could only be a couple of times per year. To volunteer, please contact Jim at 231-941-0788 or by email at xcski@chartermi.net

The Safety and Security Committee for BLC has been working diligently this past year on creating an environment in which we can worship, socialize and serve with confidence and assurance that we are, indeed, in a safe setting. We have created a Safety and Security Policies, Procedures and Guidelines handbook and have been canvassing other places of worship in our area to determine what the standards are for ensuring safety. If you have not done so, please review the handbook. Additionally, we will be doing Temple Talks to review and rehearse emergency plans should the need ever arise. Our first Temple Talk will be on Sunday, October 15, at which time we will take a few minutes to review our emergency evacuation process and even exit the Sanctuary at the close of the service as though an emergency had occurred (sort of like a fire drill without the alarms going off). This is not intended to create fear. On the contrary, we have to let our brains be aware of what to do in case of an emergency and this only happens when we practice. Again, our goal is to plan effective responses to unexpected events. We hope you will join us in this effort.

Adult Bible Study: meets on Wednesdays from 9:30-11:30am in the Youth Room, with a study of the Gospel of John.

The Zoom Book and Bible Study: meets on Wednesdays from 1:30-3:00pm, with a study the Book of Isaiah. Contact Pr Paul or Barbara Oster if you are interested in attending. Our last day of studying Isaiah is October 4th. We will resume on Wednesday, October 18th with the study of the Mitch Albom book, *Have a Little Faith*. If you are interested in obtaining this book, please contact Barbara Oster or Pr Paul.