

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

July 16, 2023 – 10am

Modern Worship, ELW Setting 3



Prelude Music

Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who greets us in this and every season, whose word never fails, whose promise is sure.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of our neighbors.

P: Merciful God,

C: ... we confess that we have sinned. We have hurt our community. We have squandered your blessings. We have hoarded your bounty. In the name of Jesus, forgive us and grant us your mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Righteous God,

C: ... we confess that we have sinned. We have failed to be honest. We have lacked the courage to speak. We have spoken falsely. In the name of Jesus, forgive us and grant us your mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God is a cup of cold water when we thirst. God offers boundless grace when we fail. Claim the gift of God's mercy: you are freed and forgiven in the name of † Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

Gathering Song: Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil (Sung Twice)

ELW #512

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!

Kyrie

A: In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

A: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

A: 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. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

A: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

A: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. **C: Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray together,

C: Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 55:10-13

God's word to Israel's exiles is as sure and effective as never-failing precipitation. Their return to the Holy Land in a new exodus is cheered on by singing mountains and by trees that clap their hands.

10 For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, 11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. 12 For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. 13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Psalm: Psalm 65: 1-13

1 You are to be praised, O God, in Zion; to you shall vows be fulfilled.

2 To you, the one who answers prayer, to you all flesh shall come.

3 Our sins are stronger than we are, but you blot out our transgressions.

4 Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your courts to dwell there! They will be satisfied by the beauty of your house, by the holiness of your temple.

5 Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation, O hope of all the ends of the earth and of the oceans far away.

6 You make firm the mountains by your power; you are girded about with might.

7 You still the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of the peoples.

8 Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs; you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy.

9 You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous; the river of God is full of water. You prepare the grain, for so you provide for the earth.

10 You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges; with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.

11 You crown the year with your goodness, and your paths overflow with plenty.

12 May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing, and the hills be clothed with joy.

13 May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak themselves with grain; let them shout for joy and sing.

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 13:1-9, 18-23

In Matthew's gospel, both Jesus and his disciples "sow the seed" of God's word by proclaiming the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near." Now, in a memorable parable, Jesus explains why this good news produces different results in those who hear.

P: A reading from... **C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. 2 Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. 3 And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. 4 And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. 5 Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. 6 But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. 7 Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. 8 Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. 9 Let anyone with ears listen!" 18 "Hear then the parable of the sower. 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. 20 As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. 22 As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. 23 But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Annie Slabaugh (video)

Song of the Day:

For the Fruit of All Creation

ELW #679

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

Offering

Offering Song:

Zeke Clemons

Offertory:

Come to the Table

ELW #481

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray.

C: God of field and forest, sea and sky, you are the giver of all good things. Sustain us with these gifts of your creation, and multiply your graciousness in us, that the world may be fed with your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Words of Institution

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.

Communion *(Please note: gluten-free wafers and white grape juice cups are available)*

Communion Songs:

***Build Us Up, Lord
By Your Hand You Feed Your People***

ELW #670

ELW #469

Final Blessing

P: The God who calls across the cosmos and speaks in the smallest seed ✠ bless, keep, and sustain you now and to the end of the age.

C: Amen.

Sending Song:

The Trees of the Field

RWS 188

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace, and the mountains and the hills will break forth before you. There'll be shouts of joy and all the trees of the field will clap, will clap their hands. The trees of the field will clap their hands. The trees of the field will clap their hands. The trees of the field will clap their hands, while you go out with joy.

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace, and the mountains and the hills will break forth before you. There'll be shouts of joy and all the trees of the field will clap, will clap their hands. The trees of the field will clap their hands. The trees of the field will clap their hands. The trees of the field will clap their hands, while you go out with joy.

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Share the harvest. C: **Thanks be to God.**



Bethlehem July 16, 2023
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

7/17—Martin Graf

7/21—Sandra Schichtel

7/23—Jim Hutchinson

We welcome Pastor Richard Anderson as Presiding for today's service. Retired pastor providing pastoral supply to congregations in the region. Previously, he served as a chaplain for Samaritas in Acme and Cadillac.

We welcome Annie Slabaugh as Preaching for today's service. Currently childcare worker as private nanny; former Youth and Outreach Director at BLC. Annie has a strong passion for children, helping them develop and grow into the people they are meant to be.

For Pastoral Care during Pr Paul's Sabbatical time, please call Barbara in the church office. If it is after hours and it cannot wait until the next work day or Sunday, you may call Barbara at home (231.668.7038) so that she can contact someone. We have two different people for Pastoral Care.

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

IMPORTANT NOTICE: We often find the front door and/or the kitchen door unlocked when there is no one in the building. Please be sure that the doors are locked when you leave.

Please Note: _____

Barbara Oster/Administrative Assistant works 9:00am-2:30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and some Wednesday mornings.

Phil Anderson/Bookkeeper works 8:30am-12:30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. This will last through the summer months.

Alanna Steffunick/Ministry Coordinator works 9:00am-2:30pm – in the office on Tuesday and Thursday and from home on Wednesday

Offerings: The offering plates are now passed during the service. The vase in the back of the Sanctuary is still available for those who prefer not to touch the offering plate.

Today's altar flowers are donated by: *Barbara Oster in Memory of her mother, Lois Oster.*

The July issue of the STAR is now available. For current issues of the Star, feel free to check online at www.bethlehemtc.org < About Us > "The Online Bethlehem Star" or type this URL to get these directly: <http://www.bethlehemtc.org/the-bethlehem-star-newsletter>.

We received the July/August/September Christ In Our Home – we apologize for the delay. Please take a copy for yourself and also for friends and family.

Looking for a link to last month's full Council minutes? Type this address/url into your web browser to get the latest approved minutes from Council: bethlehemtc.org/Council-Minutes OR you may call the office to request a copy.

Prayer Requests:

• Prayer Chain: Please contact Jan Stretlien at jstretlien@gmail.com or 231-947-3265

• Prayers read from the altar: Please call Administrative Assistant in the church office 231-947-9880

The representative for Universal Church Photo Directories will be meeting with us on Wed July 19 at 7:00 in the church office. If you are interested and come help in some way, please attend. If you cannot be there and still want to help in some way please tell the office or Cindy Monroe at cmunroe@chartermi.net.

Due Dates for STAR/Bulletin/Screen Announcements:

• STAR: The third Friday of the month sent to admin@bethlehemtc.org (Please note STAR in subject line)

• Bulletin/Verbal Announcements: Tuesday of the week sent to admin@bethlehemtc.org (Bulletin/Worship Folder is prepared on Tuesday and printed on Thursday morning.) (Please note Bulletin or Announcement in subject line)

• Screen Announcements/Weekly BLC Emails: Tuesday of the week sent to alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org

Thank you and congratulations to Jacob and Aleah Graf, Makena and Lincoln Dohm, Sammy Steffunick and Hunter Antol (especially because he was almost solo)!!!! You worked very hard at our parking lot fundraiser and earned help in any upcoming events such as Gathering...National & State, Camp and other opportunities to provide financing to help you in these events!!!--Y2A and Christian Ed Committee

Celebrate a new child in your life with a rose on the baptismal font! Cost \$10.00 per rose. Contact Barbara Oster at beo6475@yahoo.com or 231.668.7038.

THANK YOU THRIVENT!!! We have been able to stretch our funds for activities by organizing some great Thrivent Action Teams. This has included our Sabbatical Send-off Sunday, the baking of cinnamon buns, subsidizing the new Bethlehem T-shirts for the Cherry Festival volunteers, and the monthly Sunday Sundaes. And there are even some more events to come.

TODAY: Sabbatical Hike with Cheryl: I'd like to encourage all ages to attend our nature hike **TODAY right after church.** We will meet at Seven Bridges at 12:30. Seven Bridges is a short walk across several bridges that cross the beautiful Rapid River. Everyone should bring a sack lunch that we will eat at Freedom Park in Rapid City. **Please bring a lawn chair to sit on if you have one to use when we have lunch as the picnic pavilion is rented out for Sunday.** Next we will hike the picturesque 1.1 mile trail along the Rapid River. That hike can be cut to the length that each person feels comfortable with as it is just out and back. I hope children attend also. I will bring a kickball, and, if there is enough interest, we will have a kickball game. Again, one can do as little or as much as one feels comfortable with so this activity is great for all ages. Any questions, see Cheryl

Saturday July 22nd is the BLC Wine Tour. We will be leaving from The Bethlehem parking lot at 11:00 and return at 3:00. Snacks and water will be provided on the Brew Bus. We have the Hawaiian Bus. So it will be fun if we wear Hawaiian shirts or bright colors. We will be going to Bowers Harbor, Bonobo and Peninsula Cellars. We will have an hour at each location. You may purchase bottles of wine to take home. If there is a charge for samples or what you would like to have at the wineries you will be responsible for purchasing those items. The gratuity for the driver has already been paid, so if you would like to contribute to the gratuity, please give it to Cindy Monroe or Gail Goldsmith the day of the tour or place it in Phil Anderson's box in an envelope and let him know what it is for. **Today, July 16th is the last day to sign up.**

Sunday Adult Education and Sunday School will resume in the Fall.

Spotlight on Zeke: So many of us enjoy Zeke's talents with religious music, but did you know that he plays other kinds of music at various locations around town? Here is a list of his engagements in the next month that are close to TC:

Sat 7/22 -- Brady's Bar at 6:30

Thurs 7/27-- Park Place at 8:00

Tues 8/15—Bel Lago Winery in Cedar at 5:00

Sat 8/19 & Thurs 8/24—Brady's Bar outside on the patio at 6:30

Sat 8/26—Bel Lago Winery in Cedar at 3:00

SUMMER SABBATICAL ACTIVITIES: Please take a moment to review the activity sheets on the table in the Gathering Space and SIGN-UP!! The date has now been determined for the **cookie decorating activity.** It will be **TUES, Aug 8 6-8 pm.** Come prepared to have a good time.

The Sabbatical committee has decided that our Welcome back celebration on Aug 20 should include a "white-out" characteristic of many big athletic events. Anyone who obtained a new BLC logo t-shirt is asked to wear it that day. Everyone else is asked to wear a white top of their choosing. There are a few more shirts available in size L or 2X for anyone who still would like to obtain one for a \$10 donation to the Sabbatical fund.

Norm Fred has helped a previously homeless couple for a few years. They are proud people and do not like to be given charity but they will accept help in the form of donated cans that they can recycle for money. Please bring in your recyclables in for them. Leave them by the garage. These are nice people. There, but for the Grace of our God, go we.

BLC Book Club: The BLC book club is taking a summer vacation!!!! Please keep reading and bring your suggestions back to the group on Sept. 26 or send them in advance to cmonroe@chartermi.net. We hope to share meals at our meetings again besides discussing wonderful books.

Copies of the Living Lutheran magazine can be picked up at the welcome table on Sunday mornings or from the Shooting STAR box below the outside mailbox.

THANK YOU, Parking Lot Fundraiser Volunteers! BLC hosted the annual Parking Lot Fundraiser on July 1st, 2nd, and 4th. All the proceeds from this fundraiser go toward supporting Bethlehem's youth. This year, the fundraiser was very successful once again - in total for those three days, we earned **\$3,028!**

Youth Volunteers:

Makena Dohm

Lincoln Dohm

Aleah Graf

Jacob Graf

Hunter Antol

Sammy Steffunick

Harper Wiemerslage

These kids showed such great responsibility, teamwork, and leadership as they worked the entrance of the parking lot. They took money from customers, made change, gave directions, communicated with each other, and worked as a team to make sure cars were moved through quickly and efficiently. They really took this opportunity and ran with it, and did such a wonderful job. I am so proud of you all!!!

Adult Volunteers:

Erin Word

Forest Bowling

Frank Wall

John Halstead

Kay Rumbach

Linda Hansen

Mark and Kathie Bair

Martin Graf

Norm Fred

Paul and Jessica Wiemerslage

Randy Eisemann

Renee Wells

Scott Farley

Shawn Antol

Sherri Helman

Tina Dohm

Tracey Moyer

All of the work that these adult volunteers put in is so appreciated. From putting up/taking down signs and barriers, to directing cars, to answering questions, to filling in wherever needed, you all kept this fundraiser running smoothly, and made sure that the kids had a safe place to work and volunteer!

Thank you to everyone who volunteered for this event! I appreciate all of you so much. Special thanks to Norm Fred and Frank Wall, who also supervised the parking lot on July 8th in addition to volunteering for normal fundraiser days. Your care and love for the church is appreciated. Pictures from the fundraiser can be seen on BLC's website and Facebook page. Thank you, everyone!

-Alanna Steffunick, Ministry Coordinator

FREEDOM BUILDERS EVENT: You're Invited to Freedom Fest 2023 happening on **Wednesday, August 16th, at 6:30 p.m. at BlueBridge.** It will be a night of celebrating what the Lord has done through Freedom Builders in the past year and looking forward to what the Lord is inviting us to do in the days ahead. You'll have the opportunity to spend time with friends and meet new people, hear amazing stories from Freedom Builders clients and volunteers, enjoy great food from Dawn Fresh Catering-Ebels Market, and learn how you can be a part of the work of Freedom Builders. **For tickets, go to <http://www.fbmissions.org/freedomfest>.** I look forward to seeing you there! In Christ, Skip Brown

Are you looking for the Caring Table for your donations? It has been moved inside the coat room to the right. Also, the area for the Oleson and Family Fair receipts is in the lower cabinets below the mailboxes (under the A-B-Cs...). The cabinet door is marked with the receptacle inside.

Coffee and Cookies: You are welcome to stay after the Sunday service for coffee, cookies and conversation. This will be done as many Sundays as there are volunteers to make the coffee and/or bring cookies, etc. There is a sign-up sheet available near the cookies. There are open dates, so please sign up!

Name tags: Your name tags are in your mailboxes. Please retrieve them so you can proudly wear them on Sunday mornings. We often have visitors and with so many recent new members it helps them if they can see a friendly face and attach a name to it.

Adult Bible Study: will resume in the Fall with the Gospel of John.

The Zoom Bible Study: will resume in the Fall. Look for the next topic at the end of summer.

Food Pantry: HELP!!! Our outdoor food pantry has finally been found by those in need and there is hardly anything left in it!!!! Please take some time and buy some extra staple items when you go shopping. The shelves in the pantry are labeled. You can place your items right in the cupboard or you can bring them inside church and leave them on the CARE table in the coat room.

BABY PANTRY: Suggested donations for July are: tissues, laundry soap, toothpaste and brushes, baby shampoo and regular cleaning products. Thank you!

Night of Harmony: For those of you who really enjoyed our musical guests on June 11, the entire Cherry Capital Chorus of Barbershop music is presenting a performance on Aug 5 at 7:00 pm at the Presbyterian Church. Admission is \$20 for adults and \$10 for students.

A big thank you to all who turned in Olesons' receipts. We just received a check from them for \$304.88. Last year received \$651.20. Let's see if we can do even better this year! Please continue to drop off your receipts at Bethlehem. Please note they do not expire. Thank you!

Hoop's Pet Food Pantry: This is the only pet food pantry in NW lower Michigan. They primarily provide dry food, wet food, treats, cat litter and toys for mostly dogs and cats but they will support any type of pet to the best of their ability. Please visit them at the Square Deal Country Store, 900 Woodmere Ave, TC from 11:00am – 2:00pm on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of every month with your donations OR you may leave donations in the tub on our "donations" table in the coat room. The volunteers have expressed their appreciation when receiving our donations.

Have something important going on at Bethlehem that you'd like others to know about? Maybe a Small Group? A Club Event? Feature it on the Screen Announcements, weekly emails and on our Facebook Events Page! If there is something you'd like featured or included in any of these, please reach out to alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org If you are not getting the weekly emails for any reason, please contact Alanna.

Please consider signing up for Altar Flowers for a Sunday service. Please use the sign-up poster in the Narthex by signing on the date you request. Then fill out a pink slip with the necessary information and place it and a check for \$40 (payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church or BLC) in the offering plate on Sunday morning (Preferable) or during the week, in the Administrative Assistant's mailbox near the church office entrance. You may select either "in honor" or "in memory" or "to celebrate". If someone has already signed on the date you would like, feel free to add your name – we welcome more than one on a Sunday.

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, July 16

10:00am—Worship Service (S)
12:30pm—Hiking with Cheryl

Monday, July 17

Freedom Builders Mission Week Begins
4:00pm—Chair Yoga (FH)

Tuesday, July 18

Freedom Builders Mission Week
Bulletin articles due today
9:00am—Property Work Group
6:30pm—Council Meeting
7:00pm—Lautner SG

Wednesday, July 19

Freedom Builders Mission Week
11:30am—Music Rehearsal (S)
7:00pm—Church Directory Meeting (CR)

Thursday, July 20

Freedom Builders Mission Week
5:30pm—ACA (FH)

Friday, July 21

Freedom Builders Mission Week
STAR articles due today
10:00am—Sew Pieceful (FH)

Saturday, July 22

Freedom Builders Mission Week
11:00am—Wine Tour

Sunday, July 23

10:00am—Worship Service (S)