

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

July 12, 2026
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 3, page 138

Pre-Worship Music/Announcements

Prelude

GATHERING

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose compassion endures forever.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Compassionate God,

C: ... we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

P: Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love.

C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn

Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty

ELW 533

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.

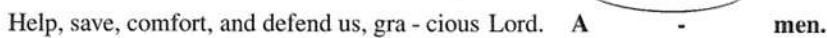
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

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.

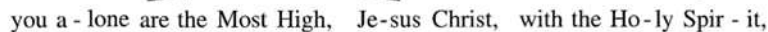
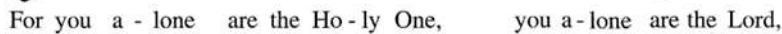
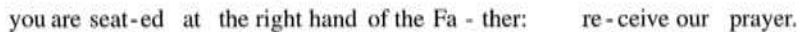
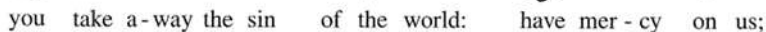
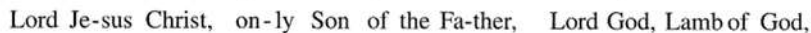
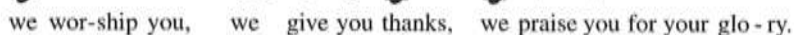
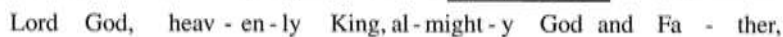
For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



Glory to God



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





Prayer of the Day

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

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.**

WORD

First Lesson

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.

Psalmody

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.

Second Lesson

Romans 8:1-11

There is no condemnation for those who live in Christ. God sent Christ to accomplish what the law was unable to do: condemn sin and free us from its death-dealing ways. The Spirit now empowers proper actions and values in our lives and gives us the promise of resurrected life.

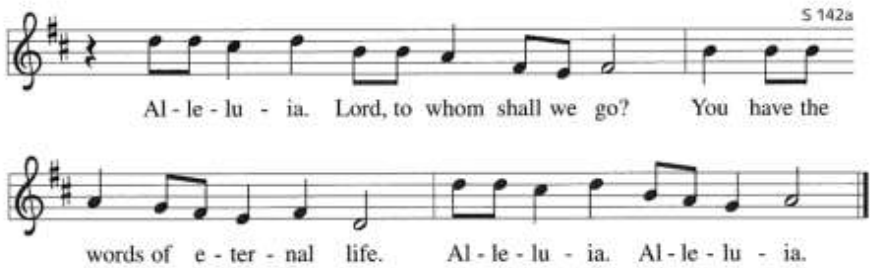
1 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed, it cannot, 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia



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.

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 a 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 If you have ears, hear!" 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 this age 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

Peggy Burns S.A.M.

Hymn of the Day

On What Has Now Been Sown

ELW 550

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 God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. (*Conclusion*) P: Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus. **C: Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

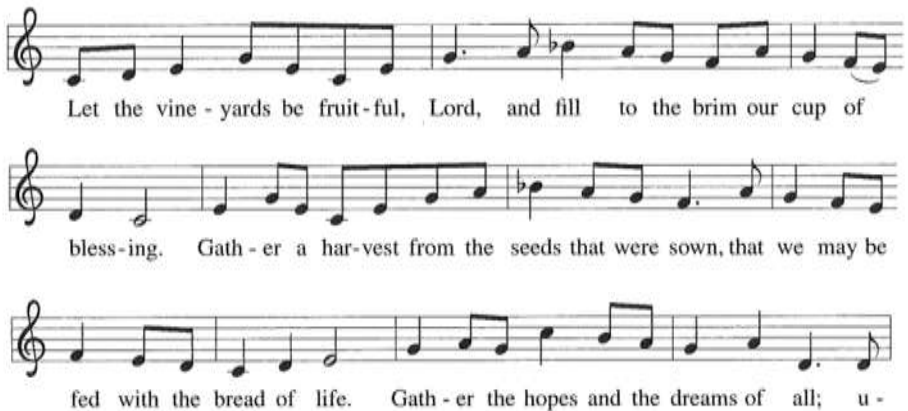
MEAL

Offering (Please be seated.)

Offering Song:

Zeke Clemons

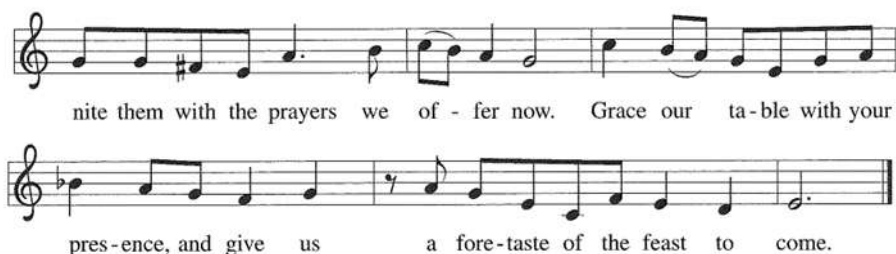
Offertory (Please stand, as able.) ***Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful***



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

bles - sing. 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 -



Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray together.

**C: Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts.
Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all
creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of
Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. Amen.**

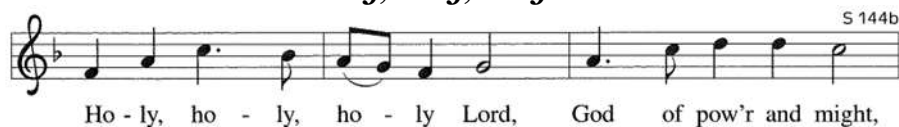
Great Thanksgiving



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



(continued on next page)



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



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

*For the Bread Which You Have Broken
Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness*

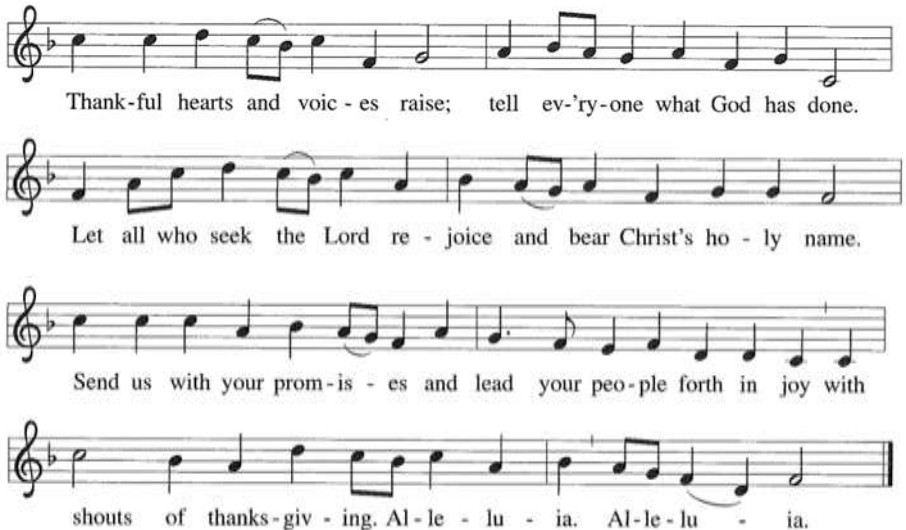
*ELW 494
ELW 488*

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 Cantic

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. Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever.

C: Amen.

SENDING

Blessing

P: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, † one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always.

C: Amen.

Sending Song *Sent Forth by God's Blessing*

ELW 547

Dismissal

A: Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

C: **Thanks be to God.**



Bethlehem
LUTHERAN CHURCH

July 12, 2026

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

7/12—Lindsey Mosley

7/15—Connie Barrow

7/15—Dick Gray

7/17—Martin Graf

7/15—Connie Christopherson

Worship Servants for July 12

Presiding—Pr. Paul Busekist

Preaching—Peggy Burns S.A.M.

Assisting Minister—Peggy Burns

Lector—Pam Reid

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*

Hospitality: Tim & Peggy Goebel

A/V—Paul Ton / Barbara Oster

Cookies/Coffee—Diane Cunningham; Mary Ann Tanis

Welcome Table—VOLUNTEER

Bell Ringer—Tim Goebel

Front Door Monitor: Tom Rockne

Altar Guild—Kate Holtfreter / Barbara Oster

Tech Support—Julia Acker

Counters—Laura Hahn / Mike McCarty

Sunday School holds class at 9:15am on Sunday throughout the summer – except for today due to the children going to camp. Sunday School will resume next Sunday, July 19th

New Adventure to the north sponsored by Membership Committee: The trip to Sault Ste Marie will now be a fall excursion instead of in the spring. In the gathering space is a poster board so you can indicate your availability for possible dates (9/26, 10/1, 10/2, 10/3, 10/5, 10/6, 10/7) and preferred activities. Our guides will be Mark and Kathy McPherson. John and Judy Block have offered their cabin which is 20 minutes from the Soo if some want to stay overnight rather than make the trip in one day. Judy indicates it can sleep a “bunch” comfortably. Please indicate available dates by TODAY July 12 so we can confirm with the McPhersons. Contact Cindy or Jim Monroe if questions.

Women's Wine Down Wednesday! Ladies, join us for a chance to wind down mid-week and socialize at Women's Wine Down Wednesday! We will be meeting at Rove Winery (7007 E Traverse Hwy) at 5pm on July 15th. Rove has a wide range of drinks including wine, ciders, mocktails, sodas, seasonal drinks, and non-alcoholic drinks, as well as a selection of small plates. If you have questions, reach out to Amy Haara at (708) 989-8124.

Freedom Builders. Join the BLC work-crew volunteers **July 22-24** to support the mission of providing housing repairs for persons facing difficult life challenges and who cannot afford to make critically needed repairs. Volunteer for one, two or three days. Both women and men with a variety of skill levels are welcome. Tools, all necessary supplies, snacks, water, and lunch will be provided. Sign up sheets and project details are in the Gathering Space. Contact Jim Hutchison or Carl Lehto for more information.

Volunteers for Watching the Front Door During Worship: The Safety and Security Committee has the new sign up sheets available. We need volunteers who can be available to stay in the Gathering Space to lock the doors and let in late comers for Sundays. We appreciate all of the volunteers. If you have any questions, the committee members are Maureen Bauer, Jana Rockne, Tim Goebel and Fred Reyelts

Where 2 or more are gathered in my name. (Matt 18:20) In our world today there are a lot of things that we need prayer for. Every 4th Tues. starting at 11:00, we will be offering a time and place in church to pray. Please join us. **There will not be a prayer time in July as the usual date is during VBS. The next date is August 25th.** If any questions, please contact Peggy Burns at 231-392-6913 or cobaltblues2003@yahoo.com

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 in the Traverse City area? Here is a list of his engagements in the next month that are close to TC:

Wed 7/15, 7/22, 7/29 – The Pub TC, Traverse City 7:00pm

Fri 7/24— Grand Traverse Resort, Acme, 7:00pm

Fri 7/17— The Dam Shop, Elk Rapids, 6:00pm

Thurs 7/30— Brady's Bar, Traverse City, 6:30pm

NEW MEMBERS: If you are interested in membership, please contact the office or membership co-chairs Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net or John Halstead at marilynjohnhc@hotmail.com