

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

July 26, 2026 – 10am

Modern Worship, WOV Setting 5



Prelude Music

Announcements

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 Song:

Have You Thanked the Lord?

ELW 829

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

Ⓐ Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: ☩ Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, . . . have mer - cy:

Ⓐ Chri - ste e - le - i - son: ☩ Christ, have mer - cy.
Christ, . . . have mer - cy:

(continued on next page)



Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray together,

C: Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

First Reading: 1 Kings 3:5-12

Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people well.

5 At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I should give you." 6 And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. 7 And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. 8 And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. 9 Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?" 10 It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. 11 God said to him, "Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, 12 I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you."

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Psalm: Psalm 119:129-136

129 Your decrees are wonderful; therefore I obey them with all my heart.

130 When your word is opened it gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

131 I open my mouth and pant because I long for your commandments.

132 Turn to me and be gracious to me, as you always do to those who love your name.

133 Order my footsteps in your word; let no iniquity have dominion over me.

134 Rescue me from those who oppress me, and I will keep your commandments.

135 Let your face shine upon your servant and teach me your statutes.

136 My eyes shed streams of tears, because people do not keep your teaching.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia



Gospel: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Throughout Matthew's gospel, Jesus and his disciples proclaim the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near!" Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people's lives.

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

31 Jesus put before the crowds another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; 32 it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches." 33 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened." 44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. 45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; 46 on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. 47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; 48 when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. 49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous 50 and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 51 "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." 52 And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Paul Busekist

Song of the Day:

God of Grace and God of Glory

ELW 705

Apostles Creed

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

(continued on next page)

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

Offering / Offering Song:

Zeke Clemons

Offertory:

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

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.

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:

***Around You, O Lord Jesus
By Your Hand You Feed Your People***

ELW 468

ELW 469

Final Blessing

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

C: Amen.

Sending Song:

All Things are Possible

Verse 1

Almighty God, my Redeemer, my hiding place, my safe refuge; no other name like Jesus, no pow'r can stand against You.

Verse 2

My feet are planted on this rock and I will not be shaken; my hope it comes from You alone, my Lord and my salvation.

Chorus

Your praise is always on my lips, Your word is living in my heart; and I will praise You with a new song, my soul will bless You Lord. You fill my life with greater joy, yes, I delight myself in You; and I will praise You with a new song, my soul will bless You Lord.

Verse 2

My feet are planted on this rock and I will not be shaken; my hope it comes from You alone, my Lord and my salvation.

Chorus

Your praise is always on my lips, Your word is living in my heart; and I will praise You with a new song, my soul will bless You Lord. You fill my life with greater joy, yes, I delight myself in You; and I will praise You with a new song, my soul will bless You Lord.

Bridge

When I am weak You make me strong, when I'm poor I know I'm rich; for in the power of Your name all things are possible, all things are possible; all things are possible, all things are possible.

Chorus

Your praise is always on my lips, Your word is living in my heart; and I will praise You with a new song, my soul will bless You Lord. You fill my life with greater joy, yes, I delight myself in You; and I will praise You with a new song, my soul will bless You Lord.

Bridge

When I am weak You make me strong, when I'm poor I know I'm rich; for in the power of Your name all things are possible, all things are possible; all things are possible, all things are possible.

Dismissal

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

C: **Thanks be to God.**



Bethlehem July 26, 2026
LUTHERAN CHURCH

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

7/26—Jalen Provo
7/26—Sandy Merrifield
7/28—Julia Acker

7/29—Tim Johnson
7/30—Maureen Bauer

7/30—Jim Parkinson
8/2—Pat Wall

Worship Servants for July 26

Presiding & Preaching—Pr. Paul Busekist

Assisting Minister—Steve Kramer

Lector—Tina Dohm

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

Today's altar flowers are donated: *By Butch Waisanen in Memory of Jan Waisanen*

Hospitality: Tim & Peggy Goebel

A/V—Jim Hinds / Barbara Oster

Cookies/Coffee—Diane Cunningham; Mary Ann Tanis

Welcome Table—VOLUNTEER

Bell Ringer—Tim Goebel

Front Door Monitor: Tina Dohm

Altar Guild—Patty Leibenguth / Kate Holtfreter

Tech Support—Julia Acker

Counters—Laura Hahn / Mike McCarty

A short information sharing session will be held after today's service to provide status of infrastructure projects and funding planned at BLC. A special Congregation Meeting will be held August 9th seeking approval for BLC to enter a mortgage to finance these projects. Please plan to attend. If you did not get a handout on your way in, please check in the back of the sanctuary.

The youth of Bethlehem held another successful Parking Lot Fundraiser this year! \$2,402 was raised over the three shifts, and an additional \$243 was put into the parking lot donation canister over the week of Cherry Festival. Thanks to all of the volunteers who made the fundraiser possible: adult volunteers Tracey Moyer, Nancy Pflasterer, Lindsay Susalski, Cindy and Jim Monroe, Pastor Paul and Meredith Busekist, Steve Kramer, John Halstead, Erin Word, Tina Dohm, and Forrest Bowling; and youth volunteers Parker Busekist, Braxton Rhodes, Kate Word, Makena and Lincoln Dohm, Noah and Nariah Finch, and Sammy Steffunick. A special thank you to Thrivent for a grant that made it possible for us to get new signs and safety vests, and supply snacks to our hardworking volunteers (and much appreciation to Cindy Monroe for coordinating the grant for us!)

BLC T-Shirts: If you ordered a t-shirt and have not picked your's up yet, you can find it in the Gathering Space. Look for your name. You may give your payment of \$25 to Lindsey Susalski. There are some extras so if you did not order one, look to see if your size is there.

Chair Yoga meets at 3:00pm on Mondays only. It is \$5 per class.

Grief Group meets the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month from 3:30-4:30 in the gathering space. The next meeting will be August 3rd. Any questions contact Peggy Burns 232-392-6913.

WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM & FRIENDS: There will be a Summer Bible Study at the home of Carl and Suzanne Lehto on Thursday, August 13th beginning at NOON. Please bring a dish to pass (meat, beverages and table service are provided), Bible and lawn chair (if possible). Please sign up in the Narthex by August 9th so we can get a handle on the number attending. **NOTE:** We need someone to be responsible to set up car pooling. Please call Nancy Ammann if interested.

The next Food Pantry collection is scheduled for Sunday, August 23rd. The community needs seem to increase in the summer time. If everyone could bring one item, it would go a long way to help us fill the closet to stock the pantry for the month. Donations are accepted anytime during the month and can be placed on the table by the bulletin board in the narthex. We have received some nice notes from some grateful people who have used the pantry. Thank you for your support.

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

Thank you so much! I want to thank you all so much for the wonderful appreciation party and the Blessing from Pastor Paul. I enjoyed talking to everyone and what beautiful cakes and cupcakes. I love the daily devotional book and all of the special notes you wrote. I will think of you every morning as I read my devotion. My new address is 207 W. 1st Street, Apt 2E, Clare MI, 48617. My phone number will remain the same 231-633-2630. Please call or come visit if you are driving through Clare. You are all such a Blessing!
Gail Goldsmith

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

Sunday School holds class at 9:15am on Sunday throughout the summer

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 7/29 – The Pub TC, Traverse City 7:00pm
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 marilynjohnhntc@hotmail.com

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 Also, if you would like to have your announcement in the Sunday bulletin, the deadline is Tuesday. Please email Barbara at admin@bethlehemtc.org If you are not getting the weekly emails for any reason, please contact Alanna at her email above.

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 \$45 (This is a new amount.) The check should be 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 August issue of the STAR will be available next weekend. If you receive the weekly email, your August issue will be emailed on August 1st. The shut-ins receive an issue by mail. There will also be a few copies available on the counter by the mailboxes. You may also contact the office at 947-9880 to request that mail delivery continues. 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>.

Please Note:

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

Phil Anderson/Bookkeeper works 8:30am-12:30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Please note that Phil works these days through the summer months

Alanna Steffunick-Boomer/Ministry Coordinator working in the office on the first Tuesday of each month from 9:30am - 12:30pm, and on Wednesdays from 11:30am - 2:30pm on all other weeks. I will also work from home throughout the week.

Today's Prayer Recipients: Please send any changes or additions by email to admin@bethlehemtc.org

Jim Hinds
Harper Wiemerslage,
Jerry Hill,
John Block,
Roy DuMond,
Mary Woodring,
Norm Fred,
Lynn,
Steve,
Sherry,
Bob,

John Stretlien,
Judy Fenton,
Cindy Hitesman,
Richard Fernholz,
Julie Lapeer,
Lee,
Chris,
Cheryl,
Julie Barrett,
Patti,
Sharon,

Kyle,
Christine,
Janet,
Cheryl
Pat,
Pat Burton,
Gretchen
Shelley Miller
Pr. Zack Nelson
Dolly
Jacque

Prayer Requests:

- Prayer Chain: Please contact Jan Stretlien at jstretlien@gmail.com or 231-947-3265
- Prayers read from the altar: Please call or email the Administrative Assistant in the church office 231-947-9880 or admin@bethlehemtc.org

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 on the calendar.

Sunday, July 26

FOOD DRIVE SUNDAY

9:15am—Sunday School
9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
10:00am—Worship Service (S)
11:15am—Infrastructure Information Sharing (FH)
1:00pm—Community Meal at Grace Episcopal

Monday, July 27

9:00am—Vacation Bible School
3:00pm—Chair Yoga (FH)

Tuesday, July 28

Bulletin articles due today

9:00am—Vacation Bible School
9:00am—Property Work Group

Wednesday, July 29

9:00am—Vacation Bible School
11:30am—Music Rehearsal

Thursday, July 30

10:00am—Piano Tuning (S)
5:30pm—ACA (FH)

Friday, July 31

6:00pm—LifeRing Recovery Group (Library)

Saturday, August 1

8:00pm—AA (FH)

Sunday, August 2

9:15am—Sunday School
9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
10:00am—Worship Service (S)
11:30am—Recognition of High School Graduates

