

Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost

October 18, 2026 – 10am

Modern Worship, ELW Setting 4



Prelude Music

Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth.

C: Amen.

P: Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Compassionate God,

C: ... we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.

P: Hear this good news: We have peace with God through ☩ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

C: Amen.

Gathering Song:

God Is Here

ELW 526

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: Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 45:1-7

The prophet announces that Cyrus the Persian emperor is the one the Lord has anointed to end Israel's exile. The Lord makes this choice so that the whole world will recognize this Lord as the only God. Persia had a god of light and a god of darkness; the Lord claims sovereignty over both light and darkness.

1 Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him—and the gates shall not be closed: 2 I will go before you and level the mountains; I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron; 3 I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who call you by your name. 4 For the sake of my servant Jacob and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name; I give you a title, though you do not know me. 5 I am the Lord, and there is no other; besides me there is no god. I arm you, though you do not know me, 6 so that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one besides me; I am the Lord, and there is no other. 7 I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe; I the Lord do all these things.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Psalm: Psalm 96:1-13

1 Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.

2 Sing to the Lord, bless the name of the Lord; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.

3 Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.

4 For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods.

5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O Lord, have made the heavens.

6 Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.

7 Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord honor and power.

8 Ascribe to the Lord the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the Lord.

9 Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the Lord, all the earth.

10 Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is king! The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity."

11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

12 Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O Lord, for you come to judge the earth.

13 You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia



(continued on next page)



Gospel: Matthew 22:15-22

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

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

15 The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap Jesus in what he said. 16 So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one, for you do not regard people with partiality. 17 Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" 18 But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? 19 Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. 20 Then he said to them, "Whose head is this and whose title?" 21 They answered, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." 22 When they heard this, they were amazed, and they left him and went away.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Paul Busekist

Song of the Day:

Lift Every Voice and Sing

ELW 841

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

Offering

Offering Song:

Zeke Clemons

Offertory:

As the Grains of Wheat

ELW 465

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray together.

C: God of creation, you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. 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:

*Bread of Life from Heaven
Now We Remain
Let Us Break Bread Together*

*ELW 474
ELW 500
ELW 471*

Final Blessing

P: The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind, in the body of Christ Jesus.

C: Amen.

P: The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: The God of grace ☩ bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sending Song:

Take My Life, That I May Be

ELW 583

Dismissal

A: Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

C: Thanks be to God.



Bethlehem October 18, 2026
LUTHERAN CHURCH

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

10/19—Gary Jones

10/20—Mark McPherson

10/23—Isaac Woolcott

Today's Rose on the Baptismal Font is in celebration of Charlotte Ann Lamb who was born on July 1, 2026. She is the daughter of Ben and Rachel Lamb and the granddaughter of Laura Okimi.

Worship Servants for October 18

Preaching & Presiding – Pastor Paul Busekist
Assisting Minister—Bethany Uhl
Lector—Scott Sorenson
Musicians: David Husser, Zeke Clemons, Phil & Denice Bossardet, Pr. Paul
Today's altar flowers are donated: *By Bill & Sue Allen in Honor of the Shepherd Family*

Hospitality—Phil Anderson / Susie Burton
A/V—Dale Wentzloff / Barbara Oster
Welcome Table— VOLUNTEER
Bell Ringer—Dave Susalski
Front Door Monitor: Tom & Jana Rockne
Altar Guild—Kate Holtfreter / Barbara Oster
Tech Support—Brian Acker
Counters—Kate Holtfreter / Cindy Cuba

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 tomorrow, October 19th. Any questions contact Peggy Burns 232-392-6913.

Chair Yoga meets at 3:00pm on Mondays. It is \$5 per class. The group will not meet on Monday October 19th. If anyone has questions or need more info regarding chair yoga they can email betsymorley@charter.net.

Our Monthly Food Pantry collection: Our next collection is Sunday, October 25th. 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. Thank you for your support of the outdoor food pantry.

Bethlehem is hosting a Trunk or Treat for community families on Sunday, October 25th from 3:00-4:30pm! We are looking for people to sign up to hand out treats from the trunk of their car. Decorating is optional but very welcomed - as simple or elaborate as you like, just nothing scary! The type of treats you hand out is up to you as well. Sign up in the narthex if you are able to participate, and even if you can't, we hope you'll come just to join in the fun! Reach out to Alanna at alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org if you have any questions!

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. **The next date is October 27th.** If any questions, please contact Peggy Burns at 231-392-6913 or cobaltblues2003@yahoo.com

Book Club: We have moved to Tuesday! We will meet at 5:30pm at the home of Betsy Morley on October 27 to discuss *The Great Alone* by Kristin Hannah. When we meet offsite many of us car- pool from BLC, so just be in the parking lot by 5:00. If interested and you have not signed up for the meal, contact Betsy for food ideas for our potluck at betsymorley@charter.net.

The Wednesday Zoom Book/Bible Study meets from 1:30pm-3:00pm in the Youth Room. We study the Book of Hebrews using the book *Hebrews* by N.T.Wright. Contact Pr. Paul or Barbara if you have any questions

Habitat for Humanity opportunity. Looking for 4-6 members of BLC to join with St. Luke's Lutheran in Grand Rapids on a trip to Sebring Florida to build houses. Dates are Nov 8-14. (Help with BLC craft fair on 11/7). No carpentry skills needed; only a love for our less fortunate neighbors. Trip cost is approximately \$1200 which includes airfare, hotel, meals, transportation and fun! Contact Fred Reyelts. text 616-560-2861 or reyeltsf@gmail.com.

The next XYZ (EXtra Years of Zest) potluck & presentation will be on Friday, November 13th. Join us for a delicious potluck lunch at noon, followed by a wonderful presentation by our own Tom Rockne. Tom traveled to Ukraine in November 2025 to support the Ukrainian war effort, and will have stories to share with us about his time there. Remember, XYZ is predominantly geared toward seniors but is enjoyed to adults of any age - all are welcome!

The impact of Norm Fred continues... His tireless attention to a host of projects around Bethlehem continues via the Tuesday Work Group. Our can collection to benefit a man and woman in subsidized housing continues with Tom Rockne taking our cans to them and them to Meijer bi-weekly to return them for needed cash to buy food. Yes, turn around... and Norm is still at work. Reminder- Place plastic bags filled with cans in the two garbage cans outside our garage... The Tuesday Work Group and others will put them in the garage for safe-keeping. Thank you!

Church Safety Volunteers We are asking for volunteers here at Bethlehem to help provide an extra measure of safety for our congregation during Sunday worship. Please consider signing up for a Sunday to serve as a safety volunteer. You can remain in the Gathering Space and view the entire service on the TV while helping keep an eye on the building and reaching out for help as needed. Your presence can help everyone worship with greater peace of mind. Thank you for considering this important ministry! 🙏

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

Harper Wiemerslage,
Jerry Hill,
John Block,
Roy DuMond,
Mary Woodring,
Lynn,
Steve,
Sherry,
Bob,
John Stretlien,

Judy Fenton,
Cindy Hitesman,
Richard Fernholz,
Julie Lapeer,
Lee,
Chris,
Cheryl,
Julie Barrett,
Pat
Patti,

Ron & Marilyn Dork
Sharon,
Kyle,
Christine,
Janet,
Cheryl
Pat,
Jacque
Carmen Svalstad
Scott Schlagel

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, October 18

9:15am—Sunday School
9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
10:00am—Traditional Worship Service (S)
12:30pm—Youth Discipleship Class (YR)
5:30pm—Verse ONTAP (Offsite)

Monday, October 19

11:00am—Finance Committee (CR)
11:00am—Funeral – Bob Pierce (at Reynolds-Jonkhoff)
2:30pm—Choir Rehearsal (S)
3:30pm—Grief Group (GS)
6:00pm—Creation Care (YR)

Tuesday, October 20

Bulletin articles due today

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

Wednesday, October 21

11:30am—Music Rehearsal (S)
1:30pm—Zoom Book & Bible Study (Zoom/YR)

Thursday, October 22

5:30pm—ACA (Library)

Friday, October 23

STAR ARTICLES DUE

10:00am—Sew Pieceful (FH)

Saturday, October 24

8:00pm—AA (FH)

Sunday, October 25

REFORMATION SUNDAY

FOOD DRIVE SUNDAY

9:15am—Sunday School
9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
10:00am—Traditional Worship Service (S)
1:00pm—Community Meal at Grace Episcopal
3:00pm—Trunk or Treat (Parking Lot)

