



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

April 27, 2025 – Contemporary Worship
Reverend Calvin Konop, Presiding
Average Worship Band, Music Leaders
Baptism of Eva Lorraine Brisson



Belonging to Christ, Sharing Christ on the North Shore & Beyond!

Introduction - Second Sunday of Easter

In spite of all we have heard and all we have seen, it is often hard to believe. Because it is hard to believe, we will invest ourselves in the Easter mystery for fifty days (a week of weeks). Because it is hard to believe, John the evangelist will provide sign after sign celebrating Jesus' victory over death. Because it is hard to believe, the risen Jesus will return to us again and again in the mystery of holy communion, inviting us to touch and taste his presence, and offering us his peace.

Prelude *How Great is Our God* **Average Worship Band**

Welcome & Announcements

Thanksgiving for Baptism

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen, indeed. Alleluia!

In the name of the One who was, who is, and who is to come. **Amen.**

Baptized into Christ's death and resurrection, and called to live the baptized life, let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Holy God, we give you thanks for the waters of baptism, waters that make a people your own, that restore to wholeness, and empower us to be witnesses in your name. Baptized into you, O Living One, **make us one as you are one.**

We give you thanks for the waters of baptism, waters that strengthen believers and give new life to beloved servants of your church; waters that extend your boundless love and cross barriers of our own making. Baptized into you, O Living One, **make us one as you are one.**

We give you thanks for the waters of baptism, waters that open the hearts of believers and give a voice in the night to those in captivity; waters that set your people on a new path, rejoicing in the Spirit's power. Baptized into you, O Living One, **make us one as you are one.**

Grant us grace, love, and life, O Living One, that our every day is shaped by these waters that give us our very lives in you. We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Crucified and Risen One. **Amen.**

Greeting

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

Song of Praise*Mighty to Save***Prayer of the Day**

O God of life, **you reach out to us amid our fears with the wounded hands of your risen Son. By your Spirit's breath revive our faith in your mercy, and strengthen us to be the body of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Children's Time

On the way up the aisles, the children will be collecting coins for the "Holy Cow" fund, which will support ELCA World Hunger.

Find that loose change and hand it to a kiddo!

**First Reading:****Acts 5:27-32**

²⁷ When they had brought [the apostles,] they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us."

²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than any human authority. ³⁰ The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

Word of God, Word of Life. Thanks be to God.

Psalm:**Psalm 118:14-29**

¹⁴ The LORD is my strength and my song, and has become my salvation.

¹⁵ **Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!**

¹⁶ The right hand of the LORD is exalted! The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

¹⁷ **I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.**

¹⁸ The LORD indeed punished me sorely, but did not hand me over to death.

19 Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.

20 “This is the gate of the LORD; here the righteous may enter.”

21 I give thanks to you, for you have answered me and you have become my salvation.

22 The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

23 By the LORD has this been done; it is marvelous in our eyes.

24 This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Hosanna! O LORD, save us! We pray to you, LORD, prosper our days!

26 Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD; we bless you from the house of the LORD.

27 The LORD is God and has given us light. Form a procession with branches up to the corners of the altar.

28 You are my God, and I will thank you; you are my God, and I will exalt you.

29 Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good; God’s mercy endures forever.

Second Reading:

Revelation 1:4–8

4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, **5** and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, **6** and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

7 Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be. Amen.

8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel:

John 20:19–31

The holy gospel according to St. John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe."²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.³¹ But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

The gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Calvin Konop

Song of the Day

I Will Rise

Baptism of Eva Lorraine Brisson



ELW page 227

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. And also with you.

Prayers of God's People

God of resurrection and new life, we come before you in prayer for the church, the world, and all who are in need. *(A brief silence.)*

Inspire the church with the breath of your Holy Spirit, that we sing the good news of the resurrection. Inspire deacons and pastors, lay leaders and bishops to boldly proclaim your love for all people. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Preserve the earth as a safe home for all creatures. Restore habitats

contaminated by pollution or overuse, strengthen efforts to shape more sustainable communities, and make us mindful of the impacts of our daily lives on the well-being of creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Kindle in the nations a spirit of cooperation and mutual care. Raise up creative and courageous leaders committed to shaping just solutions to complex challenges in our local and global communities. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Embrace all who carry wounds, that they might know your compassion. Draw near to those with chronic pain or anxiety, and all for whom death is near. Comfort individuals and communities suffering in any way especially *Mark, Dawn, Barb, Pastor Bob, Joan, Gene & Barbara, Christy, Lynn, Bruce, and Paulina*. We pray for our sister Eva and for those we name aloud, or in the silence of our hearts. (*A time of silence.*) Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Transform our fear into curiosity and love, especially across differences in race, religion, sexuality, gender identity, and economic situation. Unravel stereotypes that lead to discrimination, and destroy oppressive systems that marginalize vulnerable communities. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We remember the faithful departed from all times and places, especially Pope Francis. Confident that you are the Alpha and Omega, we pray for your wisdom and guidance until our earthly pilgrimage is complete. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Savior. **Amen.**

Offering

Average Worship Band

Offering Prayer

Risen One, **you have gathered us around your table of grace along with these gifts we bring. Come among us again, breathe your life into us, and enliven us with this meal, that we may live as your risen body in the world. Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also 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.**

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.

Invitation to Communion

Come to the table of grace. Receive the gift of new life. All are welcome!



Bethlehem Lutheran Church believes in the real presence of Christ in Holy Communion, and we practice eucharistic hospitality. All persons, whether visiting or a member, are welcomed to Communion.

Communion Music

*Come to the Table
What A Beautiful Name It Is*



Post Communion Blessing

Prayer After Communion

Living One, in this feast you have made yourself known to us. Send us now to tell of your wonders, sing of your glory, and proclaim your risen life to a wounded and weary world. Amen.

Blessing

The triune God, who was, who is, and who is to come, Sovereign, † Savior, and Spirit, light your way with resurrection dawn, now and always. Amen.

Sending Hymn

Dismissal

Go in peace. Live in hope. Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Soon and Very Soon

Average Worship Band



We welcome Eva Lorraine Brisson into our church family today through baptism. Eva is the daughter of Adrianna and Eric, sister to Bentley, and great-granddaughter of Milly Gestel. Eva's sponsors are Ashley Berglund and Nicholas Brisson. Please join us upstairs following the service in the Fellowship Hall for cake and a light lunch. Thank you to Hospitality Team #2 for serving today.

Your prayers are requested for healing: Mark Abrahamson, Dawn, Barb Coe, Pastor Bob Stoskopf, Joan Bieber, Gene & Barbara Erickson, Christy Buetow, Lynn Schulte, Bruce & Stacey Johnson, Paulina Backstrom, Shae Lindholm, Rhonda Silence, Rhonda Schulte, Emily Ulhorn, Char Anderson, Les Donek, Betty Jones, Stacey Schulte, Hank Ferland, Jack Anderson and Ramiro Acero. *If you have any updates on these prayer requests, or any new requests, please call the office at 218-387-2227.*

This week we lift up these members: Mitch & Cindy Everson; Bob Stoskopf; Phil & Sue Lund; George & Cheryl Humphrey; and John Redshaw & Kristen Carlsgaard. May God walk with these friends in their journey of peace.

The April Mission of the Month is going international - yet has a very local connection. We will be supporting the **Ray of Life** project which supplies solar light kits to families in Ukraine who are living without electricity. This mission was started by Dave Nonnemacher of Two Harbors, (formerly of Grand Marais). His non-profit, *New Horizons Foundation*, will use the funds we raise to purchase components needed for the solar kits. Volunteers will then assemble the kits and prepare them for shipping. **Member Challenge:** We are excited to have Dave come to Bethlehem on **May 20th** to lead an assembly event. The parts for each kit currently cost **\$125**. We hope our members will respond generously. *Wouldn't it be great to give this gift to at least twenty families?* This is a fun activity to participate in!

The Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly is being held next weekend, May 3 & 4, at Breezy Point near Brainerd. Pastor Calvin & Ashley Konop and Sue Hennessy will represent Bethlehem Lutheran Church. The Quilters have sent a quilt for the auction, which is an online auction. There are many items available and the proceeds will go toward World Hunger. (see bulletin insert)

NEMN Synod Emmaus Fund will be launched at the 2025 Synod Assembly. The Emmaus Fund supports leadership development, youth and young adult engagement, and congregational outreach by providing micro-grants for new ministry programs and opportunities. There will be Silent and Live Auctions, as well as a Giving Moment. We welcome your generosity to the Emmaus Fund as we kick-off this new ministry! (see bulletin insert)

We are approaching the end of Wednesday Worship for the season. May 14th will be the last of our Wednesday activities until September. *Thank you to everyone who has made these worship evenings successful.* A big thank you to the **Meal Teams**, for the wonderful food and faithful dedication every week. Thank you very much to our most excellent **musicians** who provide an upbeat and lively presence to our services. Our "Average Worship Band" is anything **BUT Average!** Thanks to **Stacey** for her leadership, organization, talents and for providing the slides each week. Thank you to our **Confirmation teachers** and **mentors** who helped to provide a strong faith foundation to our students. Thank you to our **confirmation students** and their **parents** for their commitment, cooperation and participation this year. God's blessings to all of you! A job well done. Thanks be to God!





Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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On-line giving is encouraged using this QR Code or through automatic transfer.

(Forms are available online & the office.)

This Week at Bethlehem:

Sun Apr 27	8:40 AM	Choir practice
	10:00 AM	Worship Service with Sunday School
Mon Apr 28	11:00 AM	Staff Meeting
	3:30 PM	Girl Scouts
	6:30 PM	Church Council
Wed Apr 30	12:30 PM	Text Study
	5:30 PM	Community Meal
	6:00 PM	Contemporary Worship Service
	6:30 PM	Confirmation
Thurs May 1	8:00 AM	Bible Study
	9:00 AM	Quilting
	11:15 AM	Seniors lunch With Quilters
Fri May 2	-----	Clarity Hearing Appointments
Sat May 3 & 4		Synod Assembly
Sun May 4	8:40 AM	Choir practice
	10:00 AM	Contemporary Worship Service with Sunday School

Hey Seniors! You are invited to pick out a Quilt on Thursday May 1, 2025, and have lunch with the Quilters. On Sunday May 11th the Seniors will be given their quilts along with our blessings. Following that worship service there will be cake and picture opportunities with the seniors and their families. Remember to RSVP



Traveler Cards and Local Grocery Cards are available from BLC to members of the community that need help. Please contact the office.

Coffee An': *Have you taken a turn serving for our fellowship time on Sundays?* Please sign up to bring some treats to share.

Wednesday Text Study: Join us at 12:30 pm on Wednesdays for a study of the scripture lessons.

Men's Bible Study: Every Thursday morning, beginning at 8:00 to 9:15 am. Contact Mike Chmelik for information, 218-387-1790

Free Bibles: Help yourself to a large print English Standard Version Bible, on the counter in the Narthex.

Quilters are seeking more helpers! Every Thursday morning at 9 to 11:30am. No experience necessary. We have several lovely kits ready for sewing. You are invited to the fun!

Upcoming Events:

Denise will be on vacation from May 5—26. She will return on May 27. Pastor Calvin and Jessica will be in the office most days during her vacation.

Jessica Epple Christenson, our new CYF Director, will start on Monday May 5 and will be installed on Wed. May 7. Join us for a celebration during the evening meal.

Vera Finn's Memorial Service will be Sat. May 10 at 11:00am

Memorial Day is May 26th—Office is closed

Greg Toft's Memorial Service will be Sat. May 31 at 11:00 am

Vacation Bible School will be July 14-18, 2025. 9am to noon for K-5th grade students. \$15/student. Scholarships available. More to come.

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A Celebration Auction of Generosity and Hope



Working together for 50 years to end hunger and poverty, both here and abroad, by supporting the work of the ELCA Hunger Appeal

Support the NEMN Synod in their efforts to alleviate hunger and win a beautiful quilt or handmade item in the process!

Quilts and other items are available in an on-line auction at **NEMNQuilts25.givesmart.com** or a link from the synod webpage (NEMNSynod.org). The quilts will be displayed at the Synod Assembly May 3-4 at Breezy Point Resort.



The website is open for bidding from **April 27 until May 4th at 11:30 am**. New items will be added until the Synod Assembly, so check back often.

Items will be available for pickup at the conclusion of the Synod Assembly. We will deliver/ship items but ask that the recipient cover shipping costs to maximize the donation to the world hunger appeal.

Questions: Call or text Amy Loken at 218-391-4260, Marybeth Jacob at 218-830-0355 or Bob Murray at 218-244-5074



EMMAUS FUND

Emmaus Fund GALA

Join the celebration as we launch the new Emmaus Fund endowment of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod at the 2025 Synod Assembly!

The Emmaus Fund supports leadership development, youth and young adult engagement, and congregational outreach by providing micro-grants for new ministry programs and opportunities.

Saturday, May 3, 2025

**Breezy Point Resort - Minnesota Room
Brainerd Lakes**

Doors open at 6:30pm with Dinner at 7:10pm

Meal included for resident attendees and commuters who purchased the meal plan

\$55 for other commuters and guests

Attire: Business Casual

Tickets available: nemnsynod.org/emmaus-fund

**Music by Steve & Sunday Saari
Silent Auction & Giving Moment
Live Auction with Special Packages**

(visit synod website for full listing)



Can't make the celebration? Give today!



 **Fladeboe**
ADVANCEMENT