

18TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH



PASTOR CALVIN KONOP, PRESIDING
JESSICA CHRISTENSON, CYF DIRECTOR
KARINA ROTH & THE AVERAGE WORSHIP BAND

SEPTEMBER 27, 2026 - 10:00 AM

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

INTRODUCTION

Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

PRELUDE

Your Name is Holy

Average Worship Band

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

TEMPLE TALK

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.
(Silence is kept for reflection.)

Compassionate God, **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.**

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. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG

The Trumpets Sound, the Angels Sing

ELW 531

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

Take, Oh Take Me As I Am

ELW 814

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of love, giver of life, **you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

CHILDREN'S TIME

Jess Christenson

On the way up the aisles, the children will be collecting “Noisy Change” for the “Holy Cow” fund, which will support ELCA World Hunger.

FIRST READING

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

¹The word of the LORD came to me: ²What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? ³As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins who shall die.

²⁵Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed, they shall die. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

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

PSALM

PSALM 25: 1-9

¹To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

²**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame, nor let my**

enemies triumph over me.

³ Let none who look to you be put to shame; rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

⁴ **Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.**

⁵ Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

⁶ **Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.**

⁷ Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.

⁸ **You are gracious and upright, O LORD; therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

⁹ You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.

SECOND READING

Philippians 2:1-13

¹ If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, ⁸ he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name that is above every other name, ¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

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

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

GOSPEL

Matthew 21:23-32

²³ When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴ Jesus said to

them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.”²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’”²⁶ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.”²⁷ So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸ “What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’”²⁹ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went.³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go.³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.”³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him.”

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

SERMON

Pastor Calvin Konop

HYMN OF THE DAY

Humble Thyself in the Sight of the Lord

PROFESSION OF FAITH

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

Reminded of God’s gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us. *(A brief silence.)*

Center your church in humility as we strive to follow in your way. Help us listen to the cries of those who have been unfairly hurt by the church and dare to name difficult truths. Show all your love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You call us to care for your creation. Lead us into your promise of a better world through sustainable practices and respect for your handiwork. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Inspire all in positions of authority to act honorably. Remind them of their call to use their authority for the sake of the common good. Give them the gift of humility. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Comfort those who come before you in fear and trembling. Calm troubled hearts with your forgiveness. Help all those in need *especially for Bonnie, Milly, Linda, Luke, Sarah, Nancy & Katrina*. We pray now for those we name aloud, or in the silence of our hearts. (*A time of silence*). We lift to You all those dealing with issues of mental health or addiction. Grant us your salvation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Change this congregation's heart when we say no to your call. Open us to courageous learning and service in our community, especially in new or challenging places. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your steadfast love holds all the saints who have finished their work and are at rest, *especially Lynn Schulte and Emily Ulhorn*. As we grieve, remind us of your mercy so we may also give thanks. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

SHARING THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

Love is Here by *The Many*

OFFERING PRAYER

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.**

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.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

All creation sings your praise. Sun, moon, and stars reflect your glory. Mountains, lakes, and forests declare your wonders.

With Sarah and Abraham we go out in faith, trusting your promise.
With Miriam and Moses we celebrate our deliverance from bondage.
With Naomi and Ruth we bind ourselves together in covenant love.
With Jonathan and David we delight in the gift of deep and abiding friendship.

With Mary and Elizabeth we welcome your presence in the birth of Jesus, the Holy One.

With Lazarus, Martha, and Mary we give thanks for the blessings of family.
With disciples and followers we marvel at the reign of God come near.
With saints through the ages we ponder the mystery of Christ's dying and rising.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

With hearts full of memories and hopes, we break this bread and share this cup, remembering the death and resurrection of Christ, and his promise to be with us always as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

O Divine Lover, you are the breath within us. You are our heart's desire. You are our priceless treasure. You are the garden of paradise. Come down, O Love divine. Come among us, O passionate Fire. Come within us, O Spirit of unity. Come, Holy Spirit. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

Bless us, O Lord, and these your gifts, which we are about to receive from your bounty. Bless our table and the feast we share. Bless us with gladness of heart. Come, Holy Spirit. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

At this table make us your body. Form us to be people of justice and peace. Fill us with gratitude and generosity that we may bear the fruit of love in word and deed. Come, Holy Spirit. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

Praise to you, Author of creation. Praise to you, O Beloved One. Praise to you, O Giver of all good things. Praise to you, blessed and holy Trinity, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

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

Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come! 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. (Offered in these sacraments are wine or apple juice; and regular or gluten-free wafers.)

COMMUNION MUSIC

***Come to the Table
Here is Bread***

ELW 481

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in grace unto everlasting life. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

BLESSING

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

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

The God of grace ☩ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

The Lord Now Sends Us Forth

ELW 538

DISMISSAL

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Karina Roth & Average Worship Band



TODAY, September 27

Meeting for

Confirmation Students & Parents

11:15 am in the Youth Room



Register using
this QR Code

**Wednesday
Night Activities
begin October 7**

5:30 pm Meal

*6:00 pm Contemporary
Worship Service*

*6:30 pm Confirmation,
& Adult Ed Class*



Next Sunday, October 4th:

JOIN US FOR OUR
welcome
HOME *event*

This is a special event at Bethlehem where we invite all of our friends and members who have called Bethlehem their home to come back and worship together. This will also kick off our Children, Youth, and Family Ministries for the fall. After worship we'll head out to the church lawn for a picnic of walking tacos, inflatables for kids, and games for everyone.

There are a few special things happening at Homecoming:

- ⇒ A special blessing for our snowbirds and seasonal members.
- ⇒ Installation of our CYF volunteers.
- ⇒ Sign ups and info for Bible Studies, last minute registration for CYF, and more!

Invite your friends and family to come up and see the fall colors, and then worship with us on Sunday. It will be a great celebration, and a time for everyone to reconnect.

See you next Sunday!



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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On-line giving is encouraged
using this QR Code

This Week at Bethlehem:

- Sun Sept 27** 8:40 AM AWB Practice
10:00 AM Worship Service
 11:00 AM Training for Worship Helpers
 11:15 AM Parent/Student Confirmation meets in Youth Room
- Mon Sept 28 3:30 PM Girl Scouts
- Tues Sept 29 8:30 AM Staff meeting
- Wed Sept 30 12:30 PM Text Study
 5:30 PM SOTW Meeting
 7:00 PM Jazz rehearsal
- Thur Oct 1 8:00 AM Men's Bible Study
 9:00 AM Quilting
- Sun Oct 4** 8:40 AM Choir Practice
10:00 AM Worship Service & Sunday School
11:15 AM Homecoming Celebration

Upcoming Events:

TODAY: Confirmation meeting for all students (grades 6-9) with their parents.

October 4: Bethlehem's Homecoming (Information on previous page) Fall programs. **Sunday School** begins. *We invite all of our friends and members who have called Bethlehem their home to come back and worship together. Spread the word.*

October 7: Wednesday Programs begin!

October 9-10: Care Partners Fall Chore Days. Volunteer at 218-387-3788.

October 9-10: Apple Festival in GM

October 25: Confirmation of 9th grade students

Oct. 31: Trunk or Treat 5:00-6:30pm at Community Center (Jess is organizing event—contact her to help/donate candy.)

It is with sadness mixed with joy in the promise of resurrection life that we share the news that our friend **Emily Ulhorn** passed away on Thursday. Per her wishes there will not be a memorial service. Please keep her friends and care givers in your prayers.

We pray for healing for these members & friends: Milly Gestel, Kent & Janet Peterson, Bonnie, Linda Zenk, Stacey Johnson, Clayton & Nancy Koss, Lois Johnson, Butch & Rhonda Schulte, Luke Gulstrand, Sarah Coe, Char Anderson, Phyllis Olson, Paulina Backstrom, Shae Lindholm, Stacey Schulte, Hank Ferland, Margaret Dahl, Katrina Crouse, Karen Shannon, Tom Christiansen, and Loretta Bloomquist

This week we lift up these members: Linda Johnson; Barb Backlund; Anne & Chris Hegg; Stephanie, Erik, Eli & Elizabeth Anderson; Martina & Jesse Johnson, Aubrey, Blake & Oliver. May God walk with these friends in their journey of peace.

Borealis 2026: October 18th Rehearsals begin. Times of rehearsals will be **Sundays: Orchestra at 3:30 pm, and Chorale at 5 pm.** Concerts will be Dec. 11 & 12 at 7pm. Spread the word to anyone who may like to participate.



Sunday School begins Octo. 4th at 10:00 am. Register using QR code