17th Sunday after Pentecost

September 20, 2026

Bethany Lutheran Church

Welcome Visitors.

Please sign our visitor book. There activity bags available for small children, located by the entrance of sanctuary.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 145:1-8

The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love

1 I will exalt you, my God and king, and bless your name forev- er and ever.

2 **Every day will I bless you and praise your name forev- er and ever.**

3 Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised! There is no end to your greatness.

4 **One generation shall praise your works to another and shall de- clare your power.**

5 I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty and all your marvelous works.

6 **They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts, and I will re- count your greatness.**

7 They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness; they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.

8 **The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

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.

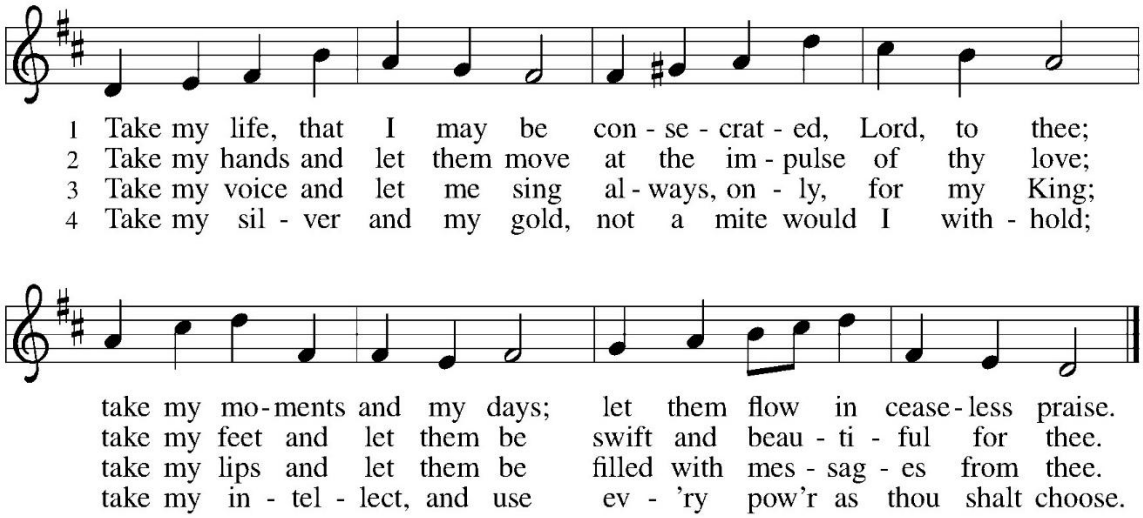
Compassionate God, **we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our 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 *Take My Life, That I May Be* (LBW 406)



5 Take my will and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.

6 Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store;
take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879, alt.
Music: PATMOS, William H. Havergal, 1793–1870

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.**

KYRIE (ELW p. 184)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and eternal God, **you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Jonah 3:10 – 4:1-11

A reading from Jonah.

3:10 When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their
evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring
upon them, and he did not do it.

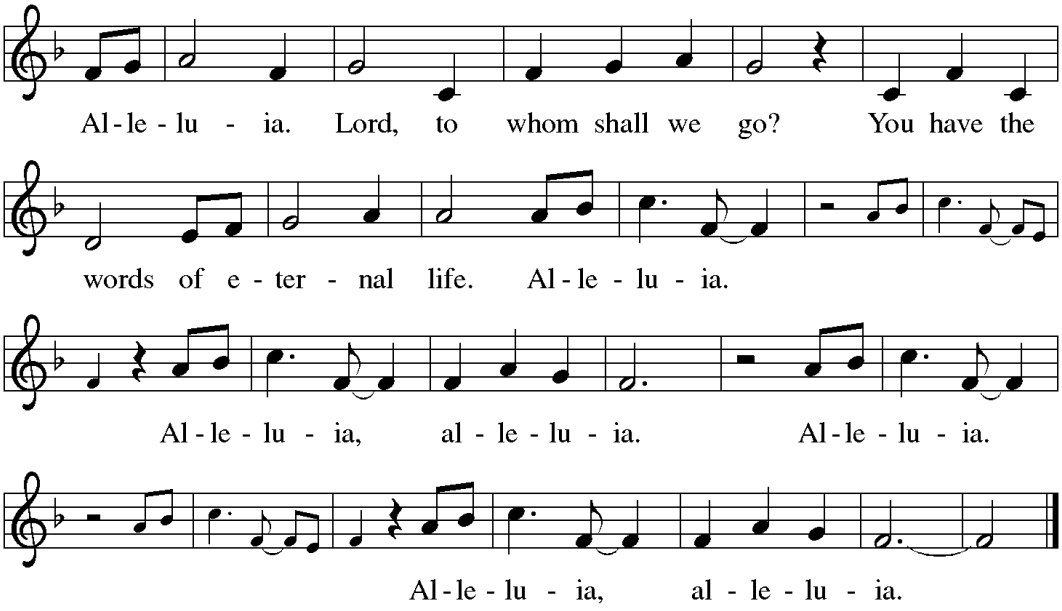
4:1 But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. 2 He prayed to
the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country?
That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and
merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from
punishment. 3 And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to
die than to live." 4 And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" 5 Then Jonah
went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there.
He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

6 The LORD God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade
over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the
bush. 7 But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the
bush, so that it withered. 8 When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and
the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might
die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.” 9 But God said to Jonah, “Is it right
for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” 10 Then
the LORD said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and
which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. 11 And
should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than
a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their
left and also many animals?”
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING: Philippians 1:21-30

A reading from Philippians.
21 For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means
fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. 23 I am hard pressed between
the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, 24 but to remain
in the flesh is more necessary for you. 25 Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will
remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, 26 so that, by my
presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.
27 Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I
come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing
firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel 28 and in
no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their
destruction but of your salvation. And this is God’s doing. 29 For he has graciously
granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well,
30 since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still
have. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: Matthew 20:1-16

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

[Jesus said to the disciples:] 1 “The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went
out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2 After agreeing with the
laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3 When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace,
4 and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is
right.’ So they went. 5 When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he
did the same. 6 And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around,
and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ 7 They said to him,
‘Because no one has hired us.

’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ 8 When evening came, the owner of
the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning
with the last and then going to the first.’ 9 When those hired about five o’clock came,
each of them received a denarius.

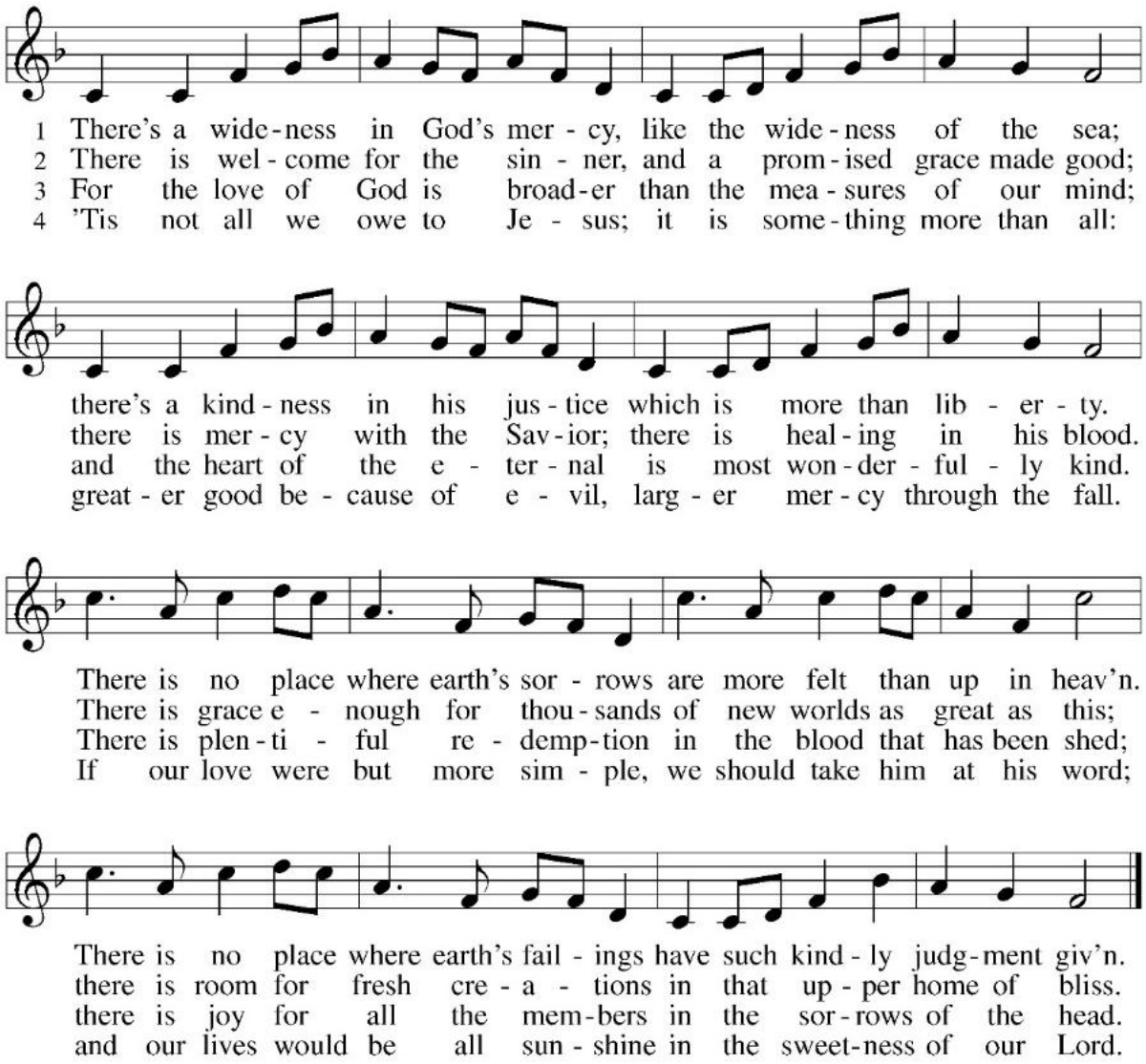
10 Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them
also received a denarius. 11 And when they received it, they grumbled against the
landowner, 12 saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them
equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ 13 But he
replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for
a denarius? 14 Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same
as I give to you. 15 Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or
are you envious because I am generous?’

16 So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

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

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy* (LBW 290)



Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863
Music: LORD, REVIVE US, North American, 19th cent.

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

Each prayer petition ends: 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.**

PEACE

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

THANKSGIVING

OFFERING *For the Fruit of All Creation* (ELW 679)

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980
Music: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
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THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Holy God, mighty Fortress, loving Redeemer, steadfast Comforter, as vegetation matures in forests and fields, your living Word undergirds all that lives.

We praise your eternal Word.

In the words of the scriptures, you offer us Christ: our refuge, our savior, our friend, accompanying us throughout our years and renewing us in love.

We praise Jesus, your Word.

We pray for power from your abiding Spirit. Strengthen us to stand firm in faith, in devotion to your Word, and in service to others.

We pray for the Spirit of your Word.

To you be honor and praise and glory, today and forever. **Amen.**

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.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

SENDING SONG *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* (ELW 733)

Text: Thomas O. Chisholm, 1866–1960
Music: FAITHFULNESS, William M. Runyan, 1870–1957
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DISMISSAL

We go, renewed and fed to create life-giving relationships **through worship, outreach and service. Thanks be to God.**

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Worship on Sunday morning is recorded on Facebook from the 9AM service.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- If you haven't, please complete the updated information form. They are on the table by Offering Plates
- September's Food Pantry Theme is "Snack Attack" – fruit bars, granola bars, cookies, crackers, trail mix
- September 20th – Sunday School after worship
- September 20th – 23rd Pastor is Off
- September 22nd – October Beacon Due
- September 27th – WELCA Meeting after worship
- October 3rd - Annual Hymn & Sing Raffle, 10am @ St. Luke's, located 30013 Oxford Rd, Elroy. Soup Luncheon available for purchase. Drawing for raffle prizes is at noon.
- October 24th – East Lemonweir Fall Luncheon
- Ladies, check out the notice on the W-ELCA bulletin board for an opportunity to attend a contemporary Christian concert in Reedsburg, Sat., Oct 24th @ 7:00 pm.
- Items for our Baby Care Kits can be placed in the clear tote in the coat room. Please note the posted changes that Lutheran World Relief has requested. As of late we are in need of small face towels.
- Health Kits are in need of dark colored bath towels, big bar soap, and individual toothbrushes.
- Quilters could use full or queen flat sheets. Thank you.
- Thursdays Bible Study: 9am @ Bethany
- Wednesday 9 am - Quilting
- Tuesday AA meetings 6:30 pm @ East Lemonweir/ Thursday 6:30 pm @ Bethany

Prayers of Concern:

Prayers for those who cannot worship with us today.

Prayers for the family and friends who have lost loved ones, especially the family of Marcia Adams.

Prayers for those who serve to protect others.

Prayers for Ken Adams, Sonja Haske, Shirley Wehman, Joel Lingl (Galen's Brother), Mike Schultz, Shawna (Tim Parker's Sister), Sandy Hempel, Amy Andres Peterson (daughter of Tom & Roxanne Andres), Holly Berry, Dean Allard, Kalie Geitner (Galen & Janenne Lingl), Katie & Doug Johnson, Becky Bailey, Fred Wehman, Steve Werth, Jordan Wehman, Tommy Paulson (Vanessa Lucas's Brother), John Preston, Garry Olson, Yvonne Olson, Jacob Sorenson, Mickie (Ron & Patti Thompson), Fran Benson, Landon LaBerge, Marilyn Wetley,
and others we silently name.

Electronic giving is available via Vanco, using this QR Code: