18th Sunday after Pentecost
September 27, 2026
Bethany Lutheran Church

Welcome Visitors.

Please sign our visitor book. There activity bags available for small children, located on the left wall of the staircase leading up to the balcony.

GATHERING

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

CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 25:1-9

1 To 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 up- right, O LORD; therefore you teach sinners in your way.**
9 You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM (ELW p. 97)

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning…your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

GATHERING SONG *Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service* (ELW 712)

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–1984
Music: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844
Text © Oxford University Press

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

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

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.**

WORD

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

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

A reading from Ezekiel.

The word of the LORD came to me: 2 What 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”? 3 As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be
used by you in Israel. 4 Know 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

25 Yet 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? 26 When 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. 27 Again, when the wicked turn away from the
wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their
life. 28 Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they
had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. 29 Yet 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? 30 Therefore 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. 31 Cast 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? 32 For I have no pleasure in the
death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

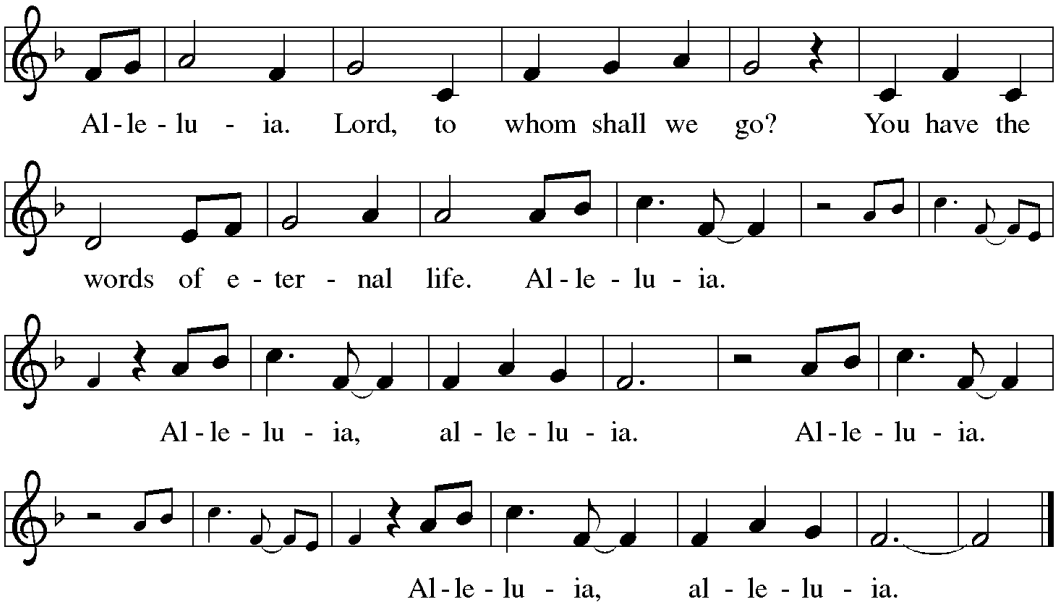
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1-13

A reading from Philippians.

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. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32

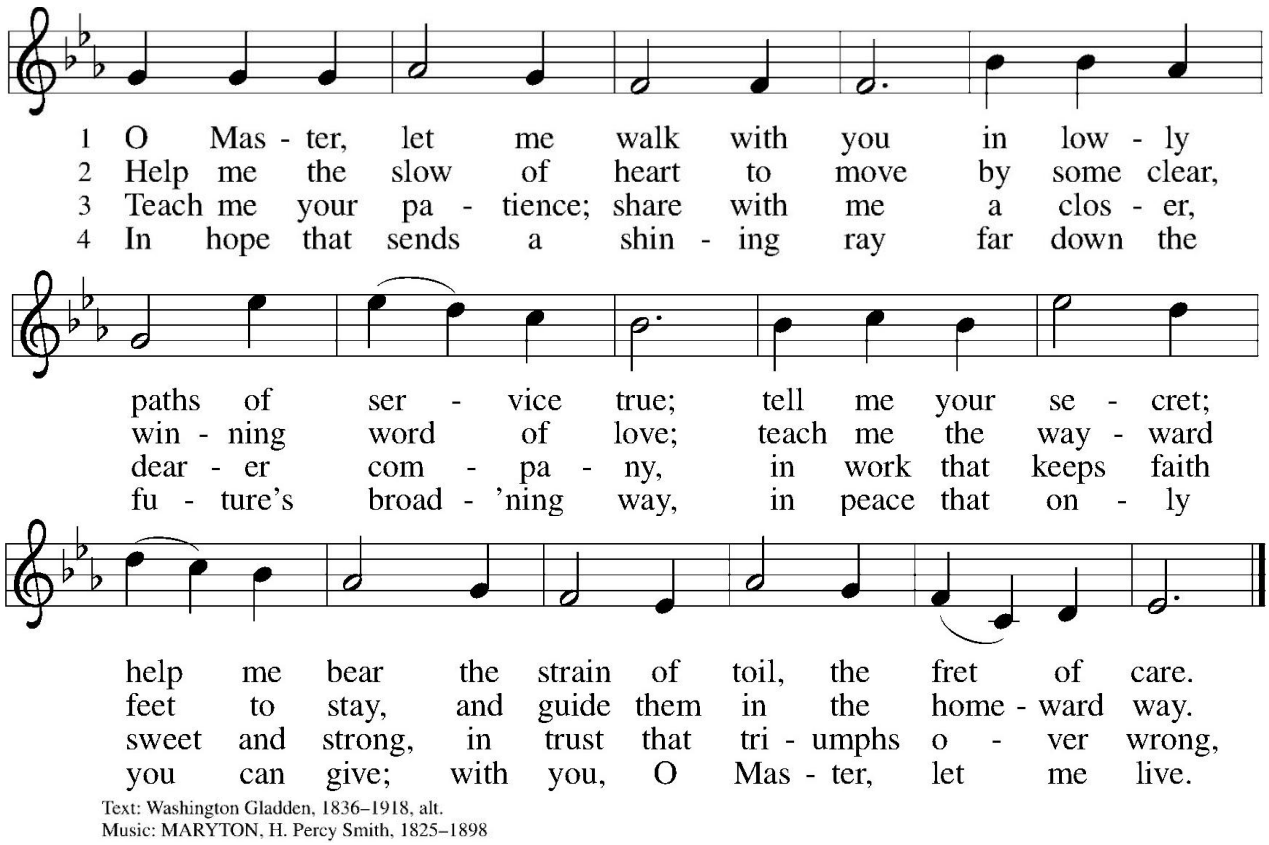
The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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

HYMN OF THE DAY *O Master, Let Me Walk with You* (ELW 818)



Text: Washington Gladden, 1836–1918, alt.
Music: MARYTON, H. Percy Smith, 1825–1898

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.**

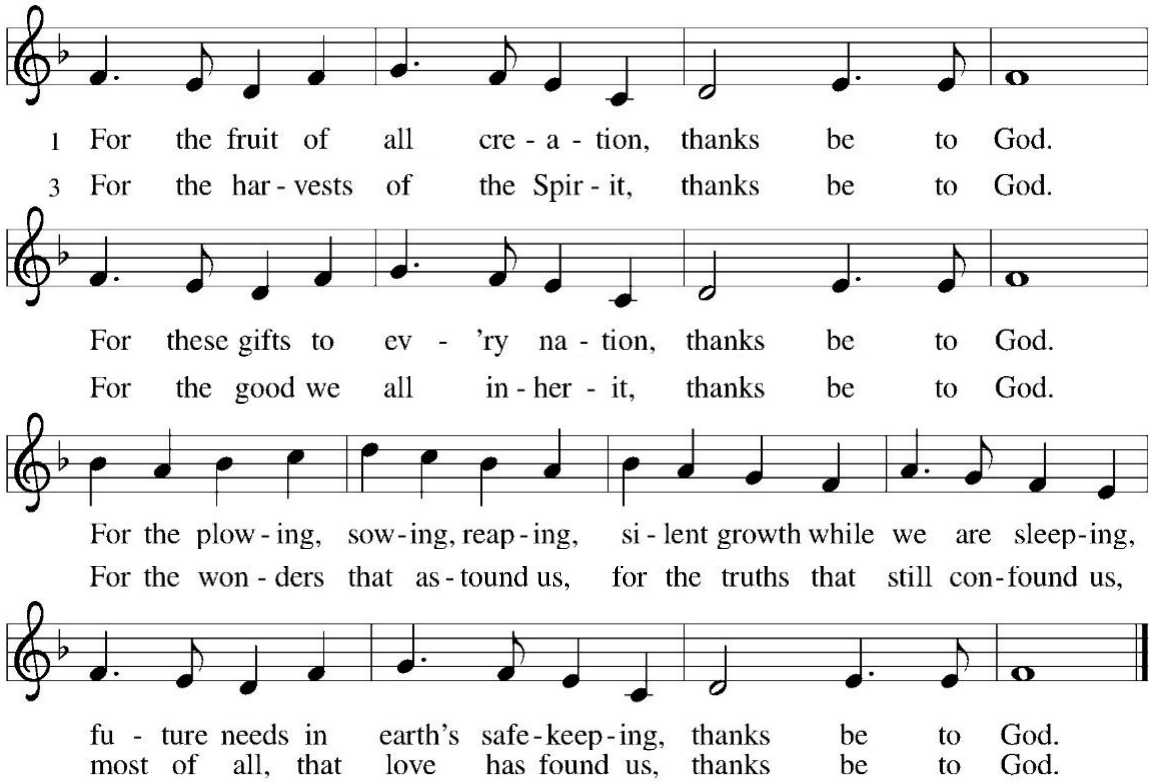
PEACE

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

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

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



Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000
Music: AR HYD Y NOS, Welsh traditional
Text © 1970 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

OFFERING PRAYER

GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

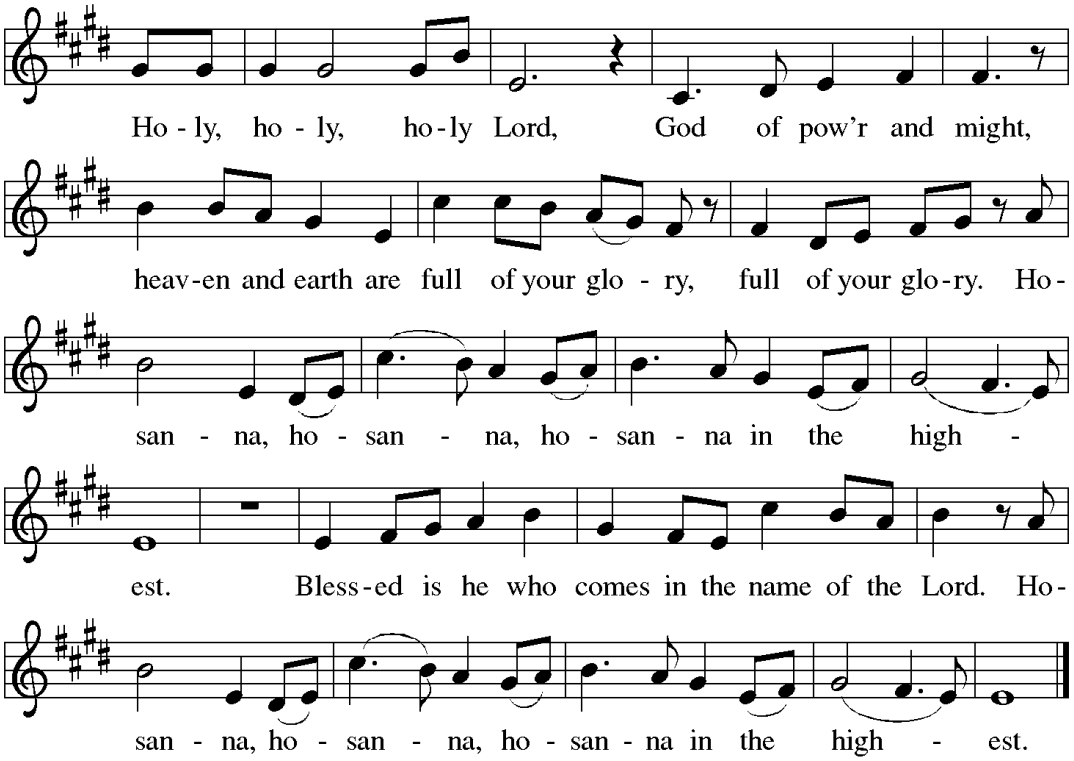
The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

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

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal: you we praise and glorify, you we worship and adore… Together as the body of Christ,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes:

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

With this bread and cup we remember your Son, the first-born of your new creation…fill us with your blessing, until, needy no longer and bound to you in love, we feast forever in the triumph of the Lamb: through whom all glory and honor is yours, O God, O Living One, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, now 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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

SENDING

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

SENDING SONG

The Lord Now Sends Us Forth: Enviado soy de Dios (ELW 538)

Text: Anonymous, Central America; tr. Gerhard M. Cartford, b. 1923
Music: ENVIADO, anonymous, Central America
English text © 1998 Augsburg Fortress.
Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

DISMISSAL

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

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. All materials printed and livestreamed under Augsburg Fortress License: SBT007061 and OneLicense: A-712026

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- September's Food Pantry Theme is "Snack Attack" – fruit bars, granola bars, cookies, crackers, trail mix
- 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 4th – 6th Pastor Lucy Off
- October 4th – Did someone say BINGO?! Come join us for Bethany Bingo on Sunday, October 4, after worship! Enjoy some fun, fellowship, and, of course, a little friendly competition! We'll also have a special cover-all prize up for grabs! And the best part—we have plenty of prizes already! Just bring yourself, grab a card, and come play! Everyone is welcome! We hope to see you there!
- October 11th – WELCA Meeting after worship **NEW DATE**
- October 24th – East Lemonweir Fall Luncheon
- 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.

The Bethany Council is proposing a change to the Bethany Constitution and has approved sending the following amendment to the congregation for consideration:

"An Audit Committee of two voting members shall be appointed by the Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Council. Term of office shall be two years, with one member appointed each year."

This change removes the previous two-year term limit, allowing an individual to continue serving on the Audit Committee as long as they—and the Council—wish. It also provides continuity and consistency in carrying out Bethany's audit processes. Because constitutional changes require two congregational votes for approval, we will hold these votes **after worship on October 11 and October 18**. If you have any questions, please reach out to a Council member.

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 Bridgette Wehman, Ken Adams, Sonja Haske, Shirley Wehman, Joel Lingl (Galen's Brother), Mike Schultz, 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: