



# Gathered Connected Sent

Bethany Lutheran Church | Long Beach, CA

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

APRIL 12, 2026

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**April 12, 2026**  
**Bethany Lutheran, Long Beach**

**PRELUDE**

**WELCOME**

**OPENING SONG: “Sing”**

**Verse 1**

We are a broken people  
Not worthy of Your grace  
Humbly we will enter  
The temple of Your praise

**Verse 2**

Fall to our knees  
Lay at Your scarred feet  
The Lamb who took our place  
Upon the mercy seat

**Pre-Chorus**

And You sing over us  
You sing over us

**Chorus**

And we'll sing of Your great mercy  
Sing of Your great grace  
Because of Your great love  
We'll sing aloud Your praise(REPEAT)

**Verse 3**

You are the one  
Who's made us hold and set apart  
Claimed as Your people  
We worship You the One True God

**Bridge**

As You sing  
As we sing

**CALL TO WORSHIP AND INVOCATION:** *(based on 1 Peter 1:1 & 2)*

- L:** Strangers in the world, God's own people, chosen according to the Father's knowledge, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and the blood of Jesus
- P:** **Grace and peace are ours in abundance.**

## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:** *(based on I Peter 1:14 , 1:18-19 & 2:1)*

**L**: As obedient children rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.

**P**: **Most merciful God, we confess that too often we are disobedient children who fail to love You with our whole hearts; and who fail to love their neighbors as much as we love ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that as obedient children we delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

**L**: Beloved children of the Lord, it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. Through Him you have been forgiven and so your faith and hope are in God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **FIRST READING: Acts 5:29-39**

Peter and the other apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than people. You murdered Jesus by hanging him on a cross. But the God of our ancestors brought him back to life. God used his power to give Jesus the honored position—the one next to him on the heavenly throne as leader and savior. He did this to lead the people of Israel to him, to change the way they think and act, and to forgive their sins. We are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

When the men on the council heard this, they became furious and wanted to execute the apostles. But a Pharisee named Gamaliel stood up. He was a highly respected expert in Moses’ Teachings. He ordered that the apostles should be taken outside for a little while.

Then he said to the council, “Men of Israel, consider carefully what you do with these men. Some time ago Theudas appeared. He claimed that he was important, and about four hundred men joined him. He was killed, and all his followers were scattered. The whole movement was a failure.

“After that man, at the time of the census, Judas from Galilee appeared and led people in a revolt. He, too, died, and all his followers were scattered.

“We should keep away from these men for now. We should leave them alone. I can guarantee that if the plan they put into action is of human origin, it will fail. However, if it’s from God, you won’t be able to stop them. You may even discover that you’re fighting against God.”—GW®

## **SECOND READING: *1 Peter 1:3-9***

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! God has given us a new birth because of his great mercy. We have been born into a new life that has a confidence which is alive because Jesus Christ has come back to life. We have been born into a new life which has an inheritance that can't be destroyed or corrupted and can't fade away. That inheritance is kept in heaven for you, since you are guarded by God's power through faith for a salvation that is ready to be revealed at the end of time.

You are extremely happy about these things, even though you have to suffer different kinds of trouble for a little while now. The purpose of these troubles is to test your faith as fire tests how genuine gold is. Your faith is more precious than gold, and by passing the test, it gives praise, glory, and honor to God. This will happen when Jesus Christ appears again.

Although you have never seen Christ, you love him. You don't see him now, but you believe in him. You are extremely happy with joy and praise that can hardly be expressed in words as you obtain the salvation that is the goal of your faith. –GW®

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

### **GOSPEL: *John 20:19-31***

That Sunday evening, the disciples were together behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jews. Jesus stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you!" When he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were glad to see the Lord.

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you." After he had said this, he breathed on the disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whenever you forgive sins, they are forgiven. Whenever you don't forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Thomas, one of the twelve apostles, who was called Didymus, wasn't with them when Jesus came. The other disciples told him, "We've seen the Lord."

Thomas told them, "I refuse to believe this unless I see the nail marks in his hands, put my fingers into them, and put my hand into his side."

A week later Jesus' disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were locked, Jesus stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then Jesus said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Take your hand, and put it into my side. Stop doubting, and believe."

Thomas responded to Jesus, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus said to Thomas, "You believe because you've seen me. Blessed are those who haven't seen me but believe."

Jesus performed many other miracles that his disciples saw. Those miracles are not written in this book. But these miracles have been written so that you will believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and so that you will have life by believing in him. –GW®

**SERMON SONG: “Christ My Victory”**

**Verse 1**

Though the terrors of the night  
Overwhelm my will to fight  
And I long for all this suffering to end  
When the arrows fly my way  
Blocking out the light of day  
There is One who shields me with His mighty hand

**Chorus**

Christ my victory  
Over ev'ry enemy  
Standing over me  
In the wake of Calvary  
I will fix my eyes  
On the One who reigns (forever)

**Verse 2**

Though the powers of this world  
Come to tear me from your hold  
They will never claim the power that is Yours  
You have broken every lie  
That has come to take my life  
For you've crushed the devil's head under your feet

**Bridge**

With a Word the war is over  
Though the devil will not rest  
I will stand upon the Word of God  
For your promise is my confidence

**Tag**

Forever

**MESSAGE: “When You're a Stranger”**

## **SONG OF THE DAY: “Is He Worthy?”**

### **Verse 1**

Do you feel the world is broken, We do  
Do you feel the shadows deepen, We do  
But do you know that all the dark  
Won't stop the light from getting through, We do  
Do you wish that you could see it all made new, We do

### **Verse 2**

Is all creation groaning, It is  
Is a new creation coming, It is  
Is the glory of the Lord  
To be the light within our midst, It is  
Is it good that we remind ourselves of this, It is

### **Chorus 1**

Is anyone worthy, Is anyone whole  
Is anyone able to break the seal and open the scroll  
The Lion of Judah who conquered the grave  
He is David's Root  
And the Lamb who died to ransom the slave  
Is He worthy, Is He worthy—Of all blessing and honor and glory  
Is He worthy of this, He is

### **Verse 3**

Does the Father truly love us, He does  
Does the Spirit move among us, He does  
And does Jesus our Messiah  
Hold forever those He loves, He does  
Does our God intend to dwell again with us, He does

### **Chorus 2**

Is anyone worthy, Is anyone whole  
Is anyone able to break the seal and open the scroll  
The Lion of Judah who conquered the grave  
He is David's Root  
And the Lamb who died to ransom the slave  
From ev'ry people and tribe every nation and tongue  
He has made us a kingdom and priests  
To God to reign with the Son  
Is He worthy, Is He worthy—Of all blessing and honor and glory  
Is He worthy, Is He worthy  
Is He worthy of this, He is

### **Ending**

Is He worthy, Is He worthy—He is, He is

**OFFERING:** *There is a plate in the Narthex for your gifts. If you so desire, TEXT GIVING is available by texting GIVE to 562 210-0463. You can also mail in your gifts to the church office.*

**CONSECRATION OF GIFTS:** *(based on 1 Peter 2:4-5)*

- L:** You have come to Jesus, the Living Stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to Him.
- P:** **We, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.**

**CONFESSION OF FAITH:** *(1 Peter 3:15) (Congregation, please join in responses both services)*

**L:** The apostle calls us to set Christ apart as Lord and be prepared to share the reason for the hope we have in Him. The hope summarized in the Creed we confess with all those who live on earth as strangers and long for Christ's appearing:

**L:** Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty?

**P:** **Yes, I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**L:** Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord?

**P:** **Yes, I believe in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**L:** Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**P:** **Yes, I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

**THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION AND CONFESSION OF FAITH:**

**\*9:30 am**

*(See page 14 for a list of the 2026 Youth Confirmands.)*

**PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH:**

**L:** Humbly, under God's mighty hand we come before Him in prayer, casting all anxiety on Him because He cares for us (*1 Peter 5:6-7*) praying Lord in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

## 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.

**\*\*\* For our 8:00 a.m. worshippers, the service continues on page 10  
with Announcements.**

**\*\*\* For our 9:30 a.m. worshippers, the service continues with the Celebration of  
Holy Communion:**

## ✠ Service of the Sacrament ✠

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at Bethany in the joyful confession that our Lord gives us His very Body and Blood for the forgiveness of sins in this sacrament. God intends this gift for His children who recognize their sin, trust in Christ as their Savior, desire to live for Him alone and join in this joyful confession.

*To prepare for communion you can find prayer prompts on the front page of the burgundy hymnal. Or simply pray: "Dear Lord Jesus, at Your gracious invitation, You invite me to come to You; to eat and drink Your holy body and blood as You Yourself have promised to give in this sacred meal. Forgive me of my sin, through this Your meal of Forgiveness. Let me experience the fullness of Your love, through this Your meal of love. Strengthen my faith, through this meal of Yours that calls for and bestows faith. Empower me to live for You, through this Your meal that promises life everlasting and equips me for daily living as one who has received You and Your gifts. Amen."*

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

*For those communing, who so desire, center cups in each tray are alcohol free.  
The wafers next to the Christ candle are gluten free.  
for those with dietary restrictions, please take a gluten free wafer.*

*In our 9:30 a.m. service we will practice the Easter tradition of continuous communion. We will not kneel at the altar, rather we will join the procession of saints and come forward and remain standing as we receive the bread and wine. After receiving the elements, you are invited to return to your seat and continue in meditation, prayer and song.*

## **DISTRIBUTION SONGS:**

### **“In Christ Alone”**

#### **Verse 1**

In Christ alone my hope is found  
He is my light my strength my song  
This Cornerstone this solid Ground  
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm  
What heights of love what depths of peace  
When fears are stilled when strivings cease  
My Comforter my All in All  
Here in the love of Christ I stand

#### **Verse 2**

In Christ alone who took on flesh  
Fullness of God in helpless babe  
This gift of love and righteousness  
Scorned by the ones He came to save  
Till on that cross as Jesus died  
The wrath of God was satisfied  
For every sin on Him was laid  
Here in the death of Christ I live

#### **Verse 3**

There in the ground His body lay  
Light of the world by darkness slain  
Then bursting forth in glorious Day  
Up from the grave He rose again  
And as He stands in victory  
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me  
For I am His and He is mine  
Bought with the precious blood of Christ

#### **Verse 4**

No guilt in life no fear in death  
This is the power of Christ in me  
From life's first cry to final breath  
Jesus commands my destiny  
No power of hell no scheme of man  
Can ever pluck me from His hand  
Till He returns or calls me home  
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

## **“My Help, My God”**

### **Verse 1**

Why are you so full of heaviness  
Why are you disquieted within  
Oh my soul oh my soul  
As the deer longs for the water brooks  
So my soul it longs and thirsts for You  
Oh my God oh my God

### **Chorus**

Put your trust in God I will yet give thanks to Him  
Put your trust in God I will yet give thanks to Him  
Put your trust in God I will yet give thanks to Him  
My Help my God

### **Verse 2**

Deep goes unto deep like ocean waves  
All Your floods and rapids on me break  
Oh my soul oh my soul  
I will say unto my God my strength  
How is it You have forgotten me  
Oh how long oh how long

### **Verse 3**

Yahweh grants His kindness in the day  
Through the night His song it is that stays  
Oh my soul oh my soul

### **Ending**

My help my God  
My help my God

## **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**BLESSING:** *( based on 1 Peter 4:11)*

- L:** The Lord will bless and keep you, make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
- P:** **To Him be praise, glory and power forever and ever. Amen.**

## **CLOSING SONG: “Long Live the King (Psalm 72)”**

### **Verse 1**

There is a King who rides on the heavens  
His coming lifts the eyes of the poor  
For all the power of their oppressor—Can hurt them no more

### **Verse 2**

He is a King like no one before Him  
His justice falls like rain on the hills  
And all who live their lives with that hunger will have their fill

### **Chorus 1**

Long live the King, Forever He shall reign  
Let the heavens ring with His praise, Long live the King  
The sun and moon will fade  
His kingdom never passing away  
Long live the King; Long live the King

### **Verse 3**

There is a righteous fire in his footsteps, An everlasting peace in His wake  
He is the King from ocean to ocean  
And age to age—Age to age

### **Bridge**

Humbled low in a manger; Lifted high on a tree  
Rose victorious Savior  
Jesus Christ our King (REPEAT)

### **Chorus 2**

Long live the King, Forever He shall reign  
Let the heavens ring with His praise  
Long live the King  
The sun and moon will fade  
His kingdom never passing away  
Long live the King, Forever He shall reign  
Let the heavens ring with His praise  
Long live the King  
The sun and moon will fade  
His kingdom never passing away  
Long live the King

### **Ending**

Long live the King  
Long live the King

## POSTLUDE



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“Sing”

CCLI Song #7064066

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“Christ My Victory”

CCLI Song #7240042

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“Is He Worthy”

CCLI Song #7108951

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“In Christ Alone”

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“Long Live the King, Psalm 72”

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**SERVING GOD'S HOUSE TODAY:**

Lector 8:00...Matt Ruiz  
Liturgist...Karl Fink  
Artist in Residence...Blake Flattley  
Children's Message...Jonathan Dose

Lector 9:30...Chris Cale  
Preacher...Pastor Kevin Kritzer  
Keyboard...Kevin Bowers



If You're a Visitor, WELCOME! We are so glad you have joined us for worship today. If you would like more information about Bethany and its ministries, please scan the QR code to the right. You will be directed to Bethany's fillable information form.



Parents of Young Children: We are so glad you and your children are here! Children are a joyful part of worship—after all, God created them with curiosity, energy, and yes, a few wiggles. Please don't feel pressure to keep them perfectly still in God's house. Their presence is truly a gift to our church family.

Worship is where we learn, together, how to listen and speak to God alongside our brothers and sisters in faith. You are welcome to quietly explain parts of the service and what our worship leaders are doing—children learn how to worship by watching and imitating you.

If it would be helpful, "worship bags" are available in the Narthex with items designed to support children and families during worship. Childcare is also available in our Nursery for children from birth through age five. Our caring and qualified staff look forward to welcoming your little one into a safe and loving environment.

Bethany's Nursery is located across the courtyard. Please feel free to ask an usher if you need directions—we're happy to help.



## **Youth Confirmation Class of 2026**

**ELIZABETH KAYE ALBERS**

*daughter of Steve and Mariam Albers*

**AUDREY GRACE KIENITZ**

*daughter of Joshua Kienitz and Vanessa Ferguson Kienitz*

**CAMERON JOHN DUNSON**

*son of John and Kelsey Dunson*

**LUKE ALEXANDER GORNE**

*son of Nels Gorne*

**JAX TURTLE NEWMAN**

*son of Jon and Lauren Newman*

**NICKOLAS AARON PERALTA**

*son of Mike and Jackie Peralta*

**LIAM RIORDAN**

*son of Sean Riordan and Jennifer Riordan*

**EMILEE DRUE TORRES**

*daughter of Gilbert and Amber Torres*

**ERIC LUIS VEGA**

*son of Reginald and Sara Vega*

Please visit our websites to find out more about our Church, School and Preschool. Get weekly updates by signing up for the **Bethany Broadcast**—our weekly capsule of worship highlights and campus-wide information.

**Bethany Lutheran Church** and its Ministries are found at: [www.bethanylutheran.org](http://www.bethanylutheran.org)

**Bethany Lutheran School** information can be found by visiting their website at: [www.bethanylutheran.org/school/](http://www.bethanylutheran.org/school/)

**Bethany Preschool's** website: [www.bethanylutheran.org/preschool/](http://www.bethanylutheran.org/preschool/)

To sign up for the weekly **Bethany Broadcast**: <https://bit.ly/BethanyBroadcastSignUp>



## TO BETHANY'S FLOWER FUND!

Flowers are used to decorate the altar every Sunday, for special seasons such as Christmas and Easter, as well as other important dates during the church calendar. You are able to make two types of donations to the Altar Flower Fund: a general donation and a special request with recognition.



- **A SPECIAL REQUEST WITH RECOGNITION\*** is a special type of Altar Flower donation. This request will be printed in the bulletin. For example, it could be given in memory of a person who has gone before us, for a wedding anniversary, baptismal birthday or a birthday celebration, etc. **This recognition has a suggested donation of \$75.**
- **A GENERAL DONATION TO THE ALTAR FLOWER FUND** enables Bethany to have flowers in worship and for our shut-in and hospitalized members to receive flowers from our flower ministry team, even when no one has ordered flowers for specific purposes on Sunday. **This General Donation is for any amount you wish to give.**

\*If you are making a **Special Request with Recognition**, please use this form to let us know of your donation **for a specific Sunday date** and what the significance of that donation is towards. **IMPORTANT:** Please complete this form at least **2 weeks prior** to that date, so that information regarding your donation can be printed in the Sunday bulletin for the date requested.

Sign up to donate to Bethany's Altar Flower Fund, please use this URL:

**<https://bit.ly/BLCAltarFlowers>**



Or scan Bethany's Flower Fund QR code to the right: