

**SEVENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST**

JULY 12, 2026

Bethany Lutheran Church *Long Beach & Cypress, CA*

As We Gather

"This epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament, and is truly the purest gospel. It is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart, but also that he should occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul. We can never read it or ponder over it too much; for the more we deal with it, the more precious it becomes and the better it tastes." Martin Luther Luther's Works vol. 35:365

PRELUDE

WELCOME

OPENING SONG: "All Creatures of our God and King"

Verse 1

All creatures of our God and King
Lift up your voice and with us sing
Oh praise Him, Alleluia
Thou burning sun with golden beam
Thou silver moon with softer gleam
Oh praise Him Oh praise Him, Alleluia alleluia alleluia

Verse 2

Let all things their Creator bless
And worship Him in humbleness
Oh praise Him, Alleluia
Praise praise the Father praise the Son
And praise the Spirit Three-in-One
Oh praise Him Oh praise Him, Alleluia alleluia alleluia

Verse 3

All the redeemed washed by His blood
Come and rejoice in His great love
Oh praise Him, Alleluia
Christ has defeated every sin
Cast all your burdens now on Him
Oh praise Him Oh praise Him, Alleluia alleluia alleluia

Verse 4

He shall return in pow'r to reign
Heaven and earth will join to say
Oh praise Him, Alleluia
Then who shall fall on bended knee
All creatures of our God and King
Oh praise Him Oh praise Him, Alleluia alleluia alleluia

INVOCATION:

- L:** Grace and peace to you from God our Father, from the Lord Jesus Christ and from the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from both. (*Romans 1:7*)
- P:** Amen

CALL TO WORSHIP:

- L:** Jesus Christ, through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead. (*Romans 1:4*)
- P:** We are among those who have been called to belong to Him. (*Romans 1:6*)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:

- L:** When Adam sinned, sin entered the entire human race.
- P:** Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned, including me. (*Romans 5:12*)
- L:** The Law of God is good. The trouble is with me!
- P:** I am bound in sin. I don't even fully understand myself. There are times in which I really want to do what is good and right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do the very thing I despise. I am a hypocrite. I know perfectly well that what I do is at times wrong, and my guilty conscience shows that I agree that the law is good. But I can't help myself. So far as my sinful nature is concerned, I am rotten to the core. No matter which way I turn, I can't make myself do right. So many have been the times that I have wanted to do right, but I couldn't. I wanted to do good, but didn't. So often when I have tried not to do wrong, I have done so anyway. What a miserable person I am! Lord, free me from the life that is dominated by sin, and rescue me from death. For the sake of Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen. (*Romans 7:18-19&25*)
- L:** I am here to announce that there is no condemnation for you who are Christ's own people. God didn't deal with the problem of sin as something remote or unimportant. In His Son, Jesus, He personally took on the human condition and set it right once and for all. Now God has taken up residence in your life, go in peace and serve the Lord.

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

- L:** Oh, the depth of the riches of Your wisdom and knowledge, O God.
- P:** From You and through You and to You are all things. To You be glory forever! (*Romans 11:33 & 36*)

SONG OF PRAISE: “We Will Feast In the House of Zion”

Chorus

We will feast in the house of Zion
We will sing with our hearts restored
He has done great things we will say together
We will feast and weep no more

Verse 1

We will not be burned by the fire
He is the Lord our God
We are not consumed by the flood
Upheld protected gathered up

Verse 2

In the dark of night before the dawn
My soul be not afraid
For the promised morning oh how long
Oh God of Jacob be my strength

Verse 3

Every vow we've broken and betrayed
You are the faithful one
And from the garden to the grave
Bind us together bring shalom

PSALM 65:1-5 *(We read responsively)*

L: Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion,
P: **and to you shall vows be performed.**

L: O you who hear prayer,
P: **to you shall all flesh come.**

L: When iniquities prevail against me,
P: **you atone for our transgressions.**

L: Blessed is the one you choose and bring near,
P: **to dwell in your courts!**

L: We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house,
P: **the holiness of your temple!**

L: By awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness,
P: **O God of our salvation,**

L: the hope of all the ends of the earth
P: **and of the farthest seas. —ESV®**

SECOND READING: *Romans 8:12-17*

So, brothers and sisters, we have no obligation to live the way our corrupt nature wants us to live. If you live by your corrupt nature, you are going to die. But if you use your spiritual nature to put to death the evil activities of the body, you will live. Certainly, all who are guided by God's Spirit are God's children. You haven't received the spirit of slaves that leads you into fear again. Instead, you have received the spirit of God's adopted children by which we call out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. If we are his children, we are also God's heirs. If we share in Christ's suffering in order to share his glory, we are heirs together with him. —GW®

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HOLY GOSPEL: *Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23*

That same day Jesus left the house and sat down by the Sea of Galilee. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat. He sat in the boat while the entire crowd stood on the shore. Then he used stories as illustrations to tell them many things.

He said, "Listen! A farmer went to plant seed. Some seeds were planted along the road, and birds came and devoured them. Other seeds were planted on rocky ground, where there was little soil. The plants sprouted quickly because the soil wasn't deep. But when the sun came up, they were scorched. They withered because their roots weren't deep enough. Other seeds were planted among thornbushes, and the thornbushes grew up and choked them. But other seeds were planted on good ground and produced grain. They produced one hundred, sixty, or thirty times as much as was planted. Let the person who has ears listen!"

"Listen to what the story about the farmer means. Someone hears the word about the kingdom but doesn't understand it. The evil one comes at once and snatches away what was planted in him. This is what the seed planted along the road illustrates. The seed planted on rocky ground is the person who hears the word and accepts it at once with joy. Since he doesn't have any root, he lasts only a little while. When suffering or persecution comes along because of the word, he immediately falls from faith. The seed planted among thornbushes is another person who hears the word. But the worries of life and the deceitful pleasures of riches choke the word so that it can't produce anything. But the seed planted on good ground is the person who hears and understands the word. This type produces crops. They produce one hundred, sixty, or thirty times as much as was planted." —GW®

SERMON HYMN:

“Thy Strong Word”

LSB 578



1 Thy strong word did cleave the dark - ness; At Thy
2 Lo, on those who dwelt in dark - ness, Dark as
3 Thy strong Word be - speaks us righ - teous; Bright with
6 God the Fa - ther, light - cre - a - tor, To Thee



speak - ing it was done. For cre - at - ed
night and deep as death, Broke the light of
Thine own ho - li - ness, Glo - rious now, we
laud and hon - or be. To Thee, Light of



light we thank Thee, While Thine or - dered sea - sons run.
Thy sal - va - tion, Breathed Thine own life - breath - ing breath.
press toward glo - ry, And our lives our hopes con - fess.
Light be - got - ten, Praise be sung e - ter - nal - ly.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
Ho - ly Spir - it, light - re - veal - er, Glo - ry,



Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
glo - ry be to Thee. Mor - tals, an - gels,



al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
now and ev - er Praise the ho - ly Trin - i - ty!

MESSAGE: *Romans 8:12-17*

SONG OF THE DAY: “Instruments of Your Peace”

Chorus

Lord make us instruments of Your peace
Where there is hatred let Your love increase
Lord make us instruments of Your peace
Walls of pride and prejudice shall cease
When we are Your instruments of peace

Verse 1

Where there is hatred we will sow His love
Where there is injury we will never judge
Where there is striving we will speak His peace
To the people crying for release
We will be His instruments of peace

Verse 2

Where there is blindness we will pray for sight
Where there is darkness we will shine His light
Where there is sadness we will bear their grief
To the millions crying for release
We will be His instruments of peace

CONFESSION OF FAITH: THE APOSTLES’ CREED (**catholic means the universal Christian Church*)

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
and born of the virgin Mary,
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day He rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.**

OFFERING: *The Offering Box is located in the center aisle. If you so desire, Text Giving is now available by texting GIVE to 562-210-0463. For On-line Giving information, contact Andria at arosas@bethanylutheran.org or call 562-421-4711, ext. 21. Thank you!*

CONSECRATING THE GIFTS:

L: Lord of all good, our gifts we bring You now;

P: Use them Your holy purpose to fulfill.

L: Tokens of love and pledges they shall be

P: that our whole life is offered to Your will.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

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.

***** At our 8:00 a.m. service, we will continue on page 11 with Announcements.**

***** At our 9:30 a.m. service, we continue with the Celebration of Holy Communion:**

✠ Service Holy Communion ✠

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 Lutheran Service Book. 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."

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

We will practice the Easter tradition of continuous communion. We will not kneel at the altar, rather we 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

DISTRIBUTION: “Let Us Love and Sing and Wonder”

Verse 1

Let us love and sing and wonder
Let us praise the Savior's name
He has hushed the law's loud thunder
He has quenched Mount Sinai's flame
He has washed us with His blood
He has washed us with His blood
He has washed us with His blood
He has brought us nigh to God

Verse 2

Let us love the Lord who bought us
Pitied us when enemies
Called us by His grace and taught us
Gave us ears and gave us eyes
He has washed us with His blood
He has washed us with His blood
He has washed us with His blood
He presents our souls to God

Verse 3

Let us sing though fierce temptation
Threatens hard to bear us down
For the Lord our strong salvation
Holds in view the conqu'ror's crown
He who washed us with His blood
He who washed us with His blood
He who washed us with His blood
Soon will bring us home to God

Verse 4

Let us wonder grace and justice
Join and point to mercy's store
When through grace in Christ our trust is
Justice smiles and asks no more

He who washed us with His blood
He who washed us with His blood
He who washed us with His blood
Has secured our way to God

Verse 5

Let us praise and join the chorus
Of the saints enthroned on high
Here they trusted Him before us
Now their praises fill the sky
Thou hast washed us with Thy blood
Thou hast washed us with Thy blood
Thou hast washed us with Thy blood
Thou art worthy Lamb of God

“Robed in the Clothes of the King”

Verse 1

They were naked in the garden
Covered in their shame
When the Father came and sought them
They hid and scattered blame
Since they’d tasted from the tree
The Father told them they must go
But before they left the garden
He’d cover them in clothes

Pre-Chorus 1

A foretaste of the promise
That one day they would be

Refrain 1

Robed in the clothes of the King

Verse 2

Many years would pass and one day
A Father’d give his son
A coat of many colors
His brothers came undone
They’d sell him into slavery
And though they wished him dead
God would raise this slave to power
Save his brothers in the end

Verse 3

Jesus our savior
A humble baby king
Born in a manger
To live and die that we
Would know true forgiveness
And live eternally
He took on clothes of rags
All so one day we would see

Pre-Chorus 2

The long-awaited promise
Isaiah had foretold We'd be

Verse 4

When He came in on a donkey
They shouted out his praise
Til they drew lots for his garments
And stuck him in the grave
The earth could not contain
A man who would die to bring
Forgiveness to the world
And be his people's king

Pre-Chorus 3

Fulfillment of the promise
That all those who believe

Refrain 2

Will be robed in the clothes of the king

Verse 5

As we one day see our savior
Glorious face to face
Our faith will be as sight
And we'll lift our voice in praise

Pre-Chorus 4

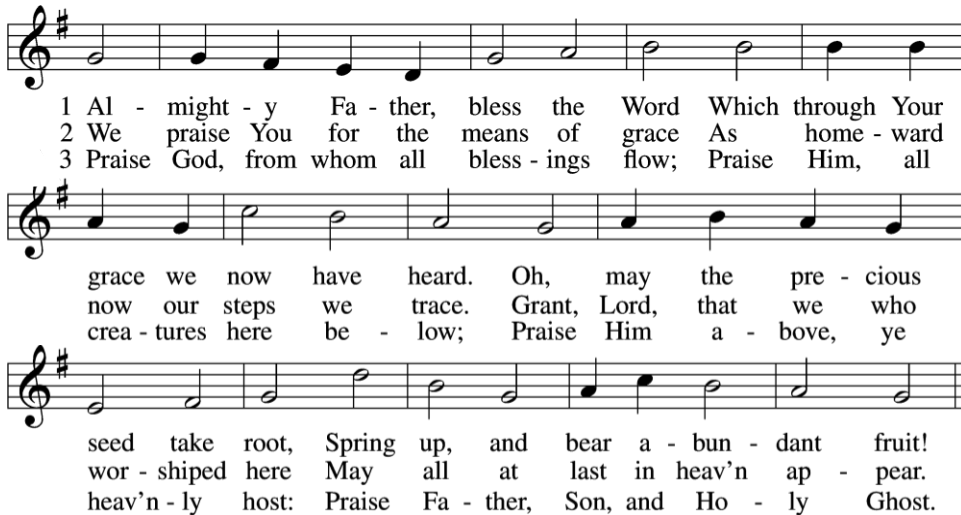
To the king of the promise
Who welcomes all to be

POST COMMUNION PRAYER**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

BENEDICTION:

L: Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believe. So let us be clothed with Christ and forgetting about satisfying the sinful self. (*Romans 13:11&14*)

CLOSING HYMN/SONG: “Almighty Father, Bless the Word” LSB 923



1 Al - might - y Fa - ther, bless the Word Which through Your
2 We praise You for the means of grace As home - ward
3 Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise Him, all
grace we now have heard. Oh, may the pre - cious
now our steps we trace. Grant, Lord, that we who
crea - tures here be - low; Praise Him a - bove, ye
seed take root, Spring up, and bear a - bun - dant fruit!
wor - shiped here May all at last in heav'n ap - pear.
heav'n - ly host: Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

POSTLUDE



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“All Creatures of Our God and King”

CCLI Song # 6529800

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“We Will Feast in the House of Zion”

CCLI Song # 7041364 Joshua Moore | Sandra McCracken

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“Thy Strong Word” LSB 578

Text: Martin H. Franzmann, 1907-76.

Tune: Thomas J. Williams, 1869-1944; setting: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923, alt..

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"Instruments of Your Peace"

CCLI# 1136271

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"Let Us Love and Sing and Wonder"

CCLI Song # 5834479

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"Robed in the Clothes of the King"

CCLI Song # 7225307

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"Almighty Father, Bless the Word" LSB 923

Text: *Church Poetry*, Philadelphia, 1823, sts. 1-2, alt.; Thomas Ken, 1637-1711, st. 3. Tune: *Trente quatre Pseaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551, ed. Louis Bourgeois. Setting: *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941. Text and music: Public domain.



SERVING GOD'S HOUSE TODAY:

Lector 8:00...Chris Cale

9:30...Chris Cale

Liturgist 8:00...Karl Fink 9:30...Pastor Kevin Kritzer

Preacher...Pastor John Alwood

Director of Music Ministries & Worship Arts...Noah Freeman

Artist in Residence...Blake Flattley

Children's Message...Karl Fink

Sound/Production...Felix Rivera & Jon Widmann



Today's Flowers are given to the glory of God:

~ Celebrating 20 years of marriage for Pat and Mare Gagan~

~by Pat and Mare Gagan



Today's Flowers are given to the glory of God:

*~ Celebrating Mathew and Kylie Fields' first wedding anniversary
on July 12 ~*

~by Jim and Linnea Fields



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.



** Please visit our websites to find out more about our Church, School and Preschool.

Bethany Lutheran Church and its Ministries are found at: www.bethanylutheran.org

Bethany Lutheran School information can be found by visiting:
www.bethanylutheran.org/school/

Bethany Preschool's website: www.bethanylutheran.org/preschool/

** Get weekly updates by signing up for the **Bethany Broadcast**—our weekly capsule of worship highlights and campus-wide information.

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

DONATE 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 \$85.**
- **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: