

Bethesda on the Bay Lutheran Church

9th Sunday after Pentecost

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Setting 10

Service of the Word

July 26, 2026

10:00 am

**Please stand as you are willing and able.*

ELW refers to the red hymnal, Evangelical Lutheran Worship.

ACS refers to All Creation Sings.

GATHERING

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

PRELUDE Prelude and Fugue in B-flat Major, BWV 560 Bach-Circle*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

TEMPLE TALK

Bob Emmerich

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose compassion endures forever.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,
we confess to you all our sins.
Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves.
In your mercy, call us back to you.
Your yoke is easy and your burden is light.
Restore us to dwell in your peace.
In Christ's name we pray, Amen.
Jesus says, "Come to me,
all you who are weary
and are carrying heavy burdens,

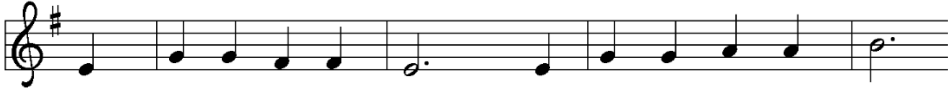
and I will give you rest.”
In the name of God,
Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,
your sins are forgiven.
Rest in God’s love.
Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN** Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty ELW 533

***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**



1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

The assembly is seated.

SPECIAL MUSIC
Chris Kiel

Nobilem Christi

Anonymous

Soloist:

WORD

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

FIRST READING

1 Kings 3:5-12

⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I should give you." ⁶ And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷ And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?"

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ God said to him, "Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you."

The reading may be concluded:

Word of God, Word of Life.

The assembly responds:

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalms 119:129-136

The psalm will be spoken

¹²⁹ Your decrees are wonderful;

therefore I obey them with all my heart.

¹³⁰ **When your word is opened it gives light;**

it gives understanding to the simple.

¹³¹ I open my mouth and pant

because I long for your commandments.

¹³² **Turn to me and be gracious to me,**

as you always do to those who love your name.

¹³³ Order my footsteps in your word;

let no iniquity have dominion over me.

¹³⁴ **Rescue me from those who oppress me,**

and I will keep your commandments.

¹³⁵ Let your face shine upon your servant

and teach me your statutes.

¹³⁶ **My eyes shed streams of tears,**

because people do not keep your teaching.

SECOND READING

Romans 8:26-39

²⁶ The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ³⁶ As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The reading may be concluded: Word of God, Word of Life.

The assembly responds: Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.

Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.

Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

***GOSPEL**

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

The gospel is announced. The holy gospel according to St. Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

³¹ [Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

³³ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴ “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹ “Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵² And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

The gospel concludes: The gospel of the Lord.

The assembly responds: Praise to you, O Christ.

REFLECTION

Mr. Chris Neumann

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

HYMN OF THE DAY The Reign of God, like Farmer's Field ACS 952
st. 1 – Cantor will sing



1 The reign of God, like farm - er's field, bears
 2 The reign of God is like a pearl on
 3 Though hid - den now, the reign of God may,
 4 Like mus - tard tree, the reign of God from
 5 The reign of God is come in Christ; the

weeds a - long with wheat; the good and bad are
 bar - ren land con - cealed. If once you find that
 yet un - no - ticed, grow; from deep with - in it
 ti - ny seed will spread, till birds of ev - 'ry
 reign of God is near. A - blaze a - mong us,

in - ter - twined till har - vest is com - plete.
 pre - cious pearl, go out and buy that field.
 ris - es up, like yeast in swell - ing dough.
 feath - er come to nest, and there be fed.
 kin - dling hearts, the reign of God is here!

***APOSTLE'S CREED**

pg. 105

***PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

P: Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

WA: God our wisdom and our song, we pray for bishops, candidacy committees, those preparing for seminary, those awaiting call as deacons or pastors, and all who seek to lead your disciples in any way. God of grace,
hear our prayer

WA: God our breath and our heartbeat, help us to recognize signs of your presence among us. Protect and support diverse ecosystems, from national parks to family farms, from ranches to wild places. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

WA: God our peace and our guide, help civic leaders hear all their peoples' stories with compassion and curiosity, and remind us of your love from which we can never be separated. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

WA: God our intercessor and our lawgiver, dismantle the barriers to care and recognition of all who live with chronic illness, mobility struggles, pain, and uncertainty. (*We pray especially for . . .*) God of grace,
hear our prayer.

WA: God our redeemer, may we trust your love above and beyond all else that distracts, annoys, frightens, exhausts, or divides us. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

WA: God who seeks, finds, and saves, for our community's part in the ongoing gift of creation, and for the riches of faith and hope which came before, we give you thanks. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

P: Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus.
Amen.

1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,

naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!

thou my best thought by day and by night,
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, thou my high tow'r,
 thou, and thou on - ly, first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

***PEACE**

The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ.

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

*LORD'S PRAYER

Pray the version of the Lord's Prayer most comfortable to you and in the language of your heart.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.	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.	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 thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

VOLUNTARY

God, Who Made the Earth and Heaven

Arr. Paul W. Hofreiter

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

OFFERING SONG

As the offering is brought forward to the altar, the congregation sings.

For the Fruit of All Creation ELW 679 st. 1-2



1 For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.
2 In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will is done.



For these gifts to ev - 'ry na - tion, thanks be to God.
In the help we give our neigh-bor, God's will is done.



For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are sleep - ing,
In our world - wide task of car - ing for the hun - gry and de - spair - ing,



fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.
in the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will is done.

*OFFERING PRAYER

Lord of the harvest,
we return to you a portion of what you have given to us.
Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches,
but on you, who richly provides for us.
Multiply what we have gathered
to bless all who are suffering and in need,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

SENDING

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

*BLESSING

The minister proclaims God's blessing.

The God of steadfastness and encouragement
grant you to live in harmony with one another,
in accordance with Christ Jesus.

Amen.

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The God of all grace + bless you now and forever.

Amen.

*SENDING HYMN

Every Time I Feel the Spirit

ACS 942

Refrain

Ev - 'ry time I feel the spir - it mov - ing

in my heart, I will pray. Ev - 'ry time I feel the

spir - it mov - ing in my heart, I will pray.

1 Up - on the moun - tain my Lord spoke,
 2 . . All a - round me looked so fine,
 3 . . Jor - dan riv - er, chilly and cold,

Refrain
 out of his mouth came fire and smoke.
 asked my Lord if all was mine.
 chills the bod - y but not the soul.

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Share the good news.
 Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Trumpet Tune in D Major David Johnson

Leading Worship Today

Chris Neumann
Eric Richardson
Deb Zudell-Dickey

Supply Preacher and Worship Leader
Minister of Music
Organist

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*Why would the organist list the prelude as being by Bach-Circle? What does THAT mean? A word about the attribution of the B-flat Prelude and Fugue from the *Eight Little Preludes and Fugues* by Bach: For many years these charming pieces were thought to have been composed by Bach himself--for his children, or as teaching tools. Scholarship lately believes that they were composed by one of Bach's pupils, possibly Johann Tobias Krebs or his son Johann Ludwig, or even the Bohemian composer Johann Caspar Fischer, because there were not many existing copies (the music wasn't widely used) and they were beneath Bach's standard of counterpoint(!).

Next week's scripture: First Reading: Isaiah 55:1-5; Psalm: Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21; Second Reading: Romans 9:1-5; Gospel: Matthew 14:13-21.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS ARE DEDICATED are dedicated to the glory of God by the Heinig Family in honor and memory of all of the saints of God who have helped form them in their lives and in their faith

LARGE PRINT BULLETINS ARE AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO NEED THEM. SPEAK WITH AN USHER OR PASTOR FOR ASSISTANCE.

CONNECT CARD – There are connect cards in the pew pockets. If you are a guest, have a prayer intention or anything else to share, please fill out a card and drop it in the collection basket. There are also opportunities listed for ways to get involved!

NAME TAGS are available for all worshipers as desired. Thank you for wearing your nametag and helping us build community and fellowship. If you do not see your nametag hanging in the Narthex or you simply need a new one printed, please contact the church office at info@bethesdaonthebay.org. There are also guest name tags for any guest attending worship.

WELCOME TO MR. CHRIS NEUMANN

Bethesda welcomes Chris Neumann back to the pulpit! Chris Neumann, his wife, and their four children are all but lifelong members of Messiah Lutheran Church in Fairview Park, Ohio where Chris has served in various leadership capacities including congregation president and occasional lay preacher. Chris earned his bachelor's degree in accounting from Kent State University and has held senior management positions in operations and process improvement for several organizations in Northeast Ohio. With a passion for the gospel of Jesus Christ, Chris also serves as treasurer for The Crossings Community, Inc. (crossings.org), and occasional writer for Crossings' Thursday Theology blog and weekly lectionary text commentaries.

SUMMER CHOIR

Everyone is welcome to make a joyful noise and have fun singing together! Summer is a good time to give it a try too! Mark your calendars and come to join the Summer Choir on August 9th. Come to the 9:20 a.m. rehearsal. No audition. Easy Peazy.

SHARE YOUR FAVORITE HYMNS FOR SUMMER WORSHIP

If you have a favorite hymn that you would like us to sing during a summer service, we invite you to send your suggestions to our Minister of Music, Eric Richardson, at ersings1@yahoo.com. Please submit the following: Hymn Title, its ELW # (if applicable), also let us know if you would like to be included as the nominator. For example: ELW 759 – “My Faith Looks Up to Thee.” (Donald Smith).

OUTDOOR WORSHIP AND PICNIC – SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, August 23

Bethesda is excited for the annual outdoor worship and picnic shared with Good Soil Lutheran in River who will be joining us again this year! Bring a chair if you can, and invite your friends to join us! Sign up to bring a side dish or dessert with you if you can. Some drinks and grilled burgers and dogs will be provided. If you'd like to plan some games or other picnic activities, please let Pr. Angela know. You can sign up on the SignUp Genius to attend, help set up, clean up and to bring a side dish or dessert. If you aren't able to use SignUp Genius, contact the office for assistance.

We will have a photographer here on August 23 during worship and the picnic to take some candid photos to use on social media and our website!

ELCA SOCIAL STATEMENT

Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All

The denomination to which we belong, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, through much study and prayer, develops and approves various social statements over time regarded to our life together as God's people. Pastors Angela and Marissa discussed this statement of the ELCA in their reflection last Sunday. You may download a full copy of the statement by following this QR code. If you would like a hard copy, reach out to the church office.



FOLLOW UP

Christians Against Christian Nationalism

Last Sunday, Pastors Angela and Marissa discussed the ELCA Social Faith and Civic Life: Well-being for All. One suggestion for a follow discussion is to review and sign in solidarity the statement offered by  Statement, up on that the non-profit org., Christians Against Christian Nationalism. You can follow the link on this QR code to read more about it and consider signing it for yourself.

PARISH NURSE

There will be a blood pressure screening in the library TODAY July 26 after worship.

GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS. - SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, September 20

God's Work. Our Hands. is an ELCA National Day of Service where all congregations are invited to provide service and outreach to their communities. A variety of projects will be provided as opportunities for the congregation to serve together in the community. If you would like to help organize any of the service projects or help organize a sack lunch for the congregation, please contact the church office.

HELP WANTED

The Property Committee seeks additional members. We attend to the appearance and structure of the Church's physical assets and assist the Bethesda Childcare Center in maintaining and updating its facilities. We recommend any actions to the Church Council.

You may choose your degree of involvement. Activities include: attending occasional meetings—whether in-person or virtual, identifying and prioritizing needs, consulting with people affected, describing work to be done, screening vendors, obtaining estimates and eliciting volunteers.

If you're interested, please contact Chrissy in the Church office or email info@bethesdaonthebay.org.

GUARDIANS GAME WITH LMM

Tuesday, August 4, 5:30 PM

LMM is heading to Progressive Field on Tuesday, August 4, and you're invited to join the fun as the Cleveland Guardians face off against the New York Mets!

Tickets include:

- Private pregame reception with buffet, unlimited soft drinks, and cash bar
- Game seating near our reception area (Sections 424-426).
- Optional free parking at LMM with shuttle service to and from the game
- Most importantly, a portion of your ticket supports LMM's life-changing programs

It's summer, it's the Guardians, and it's a great way to give back. Tickets are limited and going quickly, so reserve your spot today at www.lutheranmetro.org/2026-night-out-at-progressive-field/. Seating is flexible, so don't worry about your seat assignment. Contact the office if you need help purchasing a ticket. Finally, let Lisa Hanson know if you purchase a ticket so Bethesda people can plan to attend together.

DISASTER RELIEF WORK

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are the household of faith." Galatians 6:10

Members from both St. Matthew's in Medina and Bethesda on the Bay will travel September 13, 2026 to Carter County Tennessee to provide disaster recovery assistance. The group will drive to Tennessee on Sunday and return on Friday. Last year the congregations were extremely generous supporting of the relief work and trip. Thank you for your generosity in helping to make this all happen for the sake of the Gospel. For those unable to travel in person, you are still invited and encouraged to participate! Please pray for the travel, the work, and the relationships built between participants and the homeowners. You can offer food donations for the trip or support with a monetary gift. Also, if applicable, please consider designating a Thrivent Grant for this ministry. Reach out to Pastor Angela if you would like more info or to help.

GODSPELL – THEATER AGAPE

Theatre Agápe is an inclusive, purpose-driven community of theatre artists that partners with other non-profit organizations to raise awareness and funds for their charitable endeavors while also encouraging them to join in our artistic efforts. Theatre Agápe is presenting Godspell August 14-16 in the Peace Pavillion at Prince of Peace (28455 Center Ridge, Westlake). For more information visit www.theateragape.org/events.



TITHE.LY Opportunity to Give in new ways!



Bethesda has joined many ELCA congregations and partnered with Tithe.ly to provide an online and automatic financial giving opportunity. Giving is made easy and seamless!

Highlights of giving using Tithe.ly:

- Allows for automatic ongoing giving or a one-time gift.
- Automatic gifts can be set up weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly and “what day of the week” to give can be selected. Reminders can be set up for recurring gifts and users can make changes to their gift.
- Account set up is quick, easy, and takes no more than 10 minutes.
- Bank account or credit card options are available with numbers secured and encrypted.
- There is a Tithe.ly processing fee, but it is included in the Church’s operating budget, covering the processing fee is completely optional. The full value of the gift, including any processing fees covered, is reflected on the quarterly contribution statement.
- Tithe.ly funds are deposited directly into the church’s bank account.



