A drawing of a bird and a flame

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**BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

Rev. Molly Wills, Pastor | Jan Smith, Accompanist

Baptism of Our Lord | Sunday, January 12, 2024

ACS Holy Communion Setting 11

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Vibrantly open to the Spirit, Bethel Lutheran Church seeks to serve God

and its neighbors by joyfully living into the good news of Jesus Christ.

**SPIRIT ART**

**A meditative study of scripture through art.**

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

**GATHERING**

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

Meditation time To God the Holy Spirit arr. by Melvin Rotermund

Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne arr. by Timothy R. Matthews

Welcome & Announcements

Confession, Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life. **Amen.** Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin.

Merciful God, **you speak blessing and compassion into the world. Forgive us for the ways we act with judgment, cruelty, or indifference. We ignore the needs of our neighbors; we resist your call to oppose injustice; we give in to scarcity and fear; we assume the worst about one another. Cleanse us from our faults** **and release us from their grasp. Show us your lovingkindness. Restore our hearts and repair your world, that we may live in Christ’s ways. Amen.**

God proclaims these words of assurance: “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine.” In + Christ, you are forgiven. In the Spirit, you are made free. Refreshed by the waters of mercy, live anew as beloved children of God. **Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG** Made For Love (see insert)

Greeting (purple ACS p. 12)

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 (purple ACS p. 12)

Canticle of Praise (purple ACS p. 12)

Prayer of the Day

**Almighty God, you anointed Jesus at his baptism with the Holy Spirit and revealed him as your beloved Son. Keep all who are born of water and the Spirit faithful in your service, that we may rejoice to be called children of God, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

**WORD**

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

FIRST Reading: Isaiah 43:1-7

1 But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. 3 For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you. 4 Because you are precious in my sight and honored and I love you, I give people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life. 5 Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you; 6 I will say to the north, “Give them up,” and to the south, “Do not withhold; bring my sons from far away and my daughters from the end of the earth—7 everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.” Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 29 (read responsively)

1 Ascribe to the Lord, you gods, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.  
2 **Ascribe to the Lord the glory due God’s name;** **worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.**  
3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders; the Lord is upon the mighty waters.  
4 **The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice;** **the voice of the Lord is a voice of splendor.**   
5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;  
6 **the Lord makes Lebanon skip like a calf,** **and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.**  
7 The voice of the Lord bursts forth in lightning flashes.  
8 **The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness;** **the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**   
9 The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare. And in the temple of the Lord all are crying, “Glory!”  
10 **The Lord sits enthroned above the flood;** **the Lord sits enthroned as king forevermore.**  
11 O Lord, give strength | to your people; give them, O Lord, the blessings of peace.

SECOND Reading: Acts 8:14-17

14 Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. 15 The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit 16 (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). 17 Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation (purple ACS p. 14)

Gospel: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

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

15 As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, 16 John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.” 21 Now when all the people were baptized and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.” The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day *Christ, When for Us You Were Baptized* **(red hymnal #304)**

apostles’ Creed (purple ACS p. 17-18)

Prayers of Intercession God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

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

**MEAL**

**God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.**

Offering Purify My Heart arr. by Jeff Nelson

OfferTORY Prayer

**God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always. Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving (purple ACS p. 20)

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 (purple ACS p. 20)

Thanksgiving at the Table (purple ACS p. 21)

…with every breath. **We praise you, O God**

**.**…into the future. **We rejoice in you, O God**

**.**…with us now. **We thank you, O God**

**.**…proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again**

**.**…in your church, without end. **Amen.**

Lord’s prayer (purple ACS p. 24)

Communion song (purple ACS p. 25)

Song during communion *Baptized and Set Free* (red hymnal #453)

Prayer after Communion

**SENDING**

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

Blessing

The Spirit of the triune God + bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love. **Amen.**

Sending hymn *Every Time I Feel the Spirit* (purple hymnal #942)

Dismissal Go in peace. Live in hope. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart arr. by Fredrick C. Atkinson

**ABOUT THE PRAYER OF THE DAY**

The prayer of the day, based on #178 in the 1993 Presbyterian Book of Common Worship (p. 200), asks that we who have joined Jesus in baptism may join God’s entire family in lives of faithful service.

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**WELCOME TO BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH! WE’RE GLAD YOU’RE HERE!**

***If you are new to Bethel, here is some helpful worship information****: We use the ELW (red hymnal) and the supplement ACS (purple hymnal), which contain liturgy and hymns. Liturgy pages are at the front of each hymnal, with the page numbers at the bottom and in the bulletin as (red ELW p.) or (purple ACS p.) Hymn pages are in the back two-thirds of the hymnals, with the page numbers at the top and in the bulletin as (red hymnal #) or (purple hymnal #). The songs from the Green Book are in the bulletin as (green book #).*

***Hearing assist devices are available;*** *speak to an usher for assistance.*

**THIS WEEK AT BETHEL**

Today

* Sunday school, God’s Grace for 2nd graders, Confirmation, fellowship: after worship
* *The Chosen*: 10:15 am

Monday, January 13

* Bible study: 1:30 pm
* Lori’s retirement gathering: 5:30 pm and Council meeting: 6:00 pm

Wednesday, January 15

* Youth Task Force Social: 12:40 pm-1:40 pm, Bethel Fellowship Hall
* Book Club discussion: 7:30 pm

Thursday, January 16

* MEFS Mobile Outreach bus: 1:30 pm-3:00 pm, Bethel parking lot

Saturday, January 18

* Girl Scout meeting: 1:00 pm

Sunday, January 19 (Pastor Susan)

* Worship: 9:00 am (God’s Grace for 2nd graders blessing)
* Sunday school & BLTs, fellowship: after worship
* *The Chosen*: 10:15 am
* Bethel Breakfast: 10:30 am, Longhorn’s Burger House, LP

**QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS?** Contact the church office at 320-395-2125 or bethellutheranlp@gmail.com. Call Pastor Molly Wills at 320-339-8169 or email pastor@lpbethel.org for emergency pastoral care needs.

**ADDRESS:** 77 Lincoln AVE N, Lester Prairie, MN 55354, (Mailing USPS: PO Box 207)

**WEBSITE**: [www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org)

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Description automatically generatedFACEBOOK:** www.facebook.com/lpbethel

**BULLETIN SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** Wednesdays at noon

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:** 25th of the month

**ONLINE GIVING:** scan the QR code

**TEXT GIVING:** To give, text dollar amount to 866-298-7547

**SIMPLY GIVING** offers convenience for you and much-needed consistency for Bethel! For more information, contact Stacy Meyer, Financial Secretary, at finsec@lpbethel.org.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

* **NOMINATING COMMITTEE SEEKING 2025 VOLUNTEERS**: Open positions include: Council positions: President, Secretary, Financial Secretary (all 2-year terms), Finance Board and Education Board (both 2-year terms, they partner with another board member, and only one person from each board needs to attend the council meetings) Committee positions: Cemetery 2-year term, Mission Endowment 3-year term/need two, Audit 3-year term/need one, Nominating 1-year term/need four, Synod Assembly in June/one male & one female. *Contact Peggy Wick, Ron Foust, or Brian Duncan if you want to serve in 2025!*
* **UPCOMING MILESTONE CLASSES:** *Ten Commandments for 4th graders*: February 2 with a blessing during worship on February 9. *Stewardship for 6th graders*: February 9 with a blessing during worship on February 16. The classes will be held after worship.
* **YOUTH TASK FORCE SOCIAL:** Bethel will host the Youth Task Force Social on Wednesday, January 15, 12:40 pm-1:40 pm. We will need volunteers to come early to set up card-making supplies on the tables, pop popcorn, etc., and volunteers to sit at each table to help the students. If you would like to volunteer, contact Pastor Molly.
* **BETHEL’S ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, SUNDAY, JANUARY 26:** The meeting will begin immediately following worship. A potluck meal will follow the meeting.Please make every effort to attend this important meeting for our congregation.
* **A MULTI-LEVEL AGE GIRL SCOUT TROOP** will meet monthly at our church starting January 18 at 1:00 pm. At the first meeting, they will decide which Saturday of the month to meet and what time. Girls K-12 are invited to join. It will be a multi-level age group because it is the only Girl Scout troop available in Lester Prairie. The leader is Deb Riske. If anyone is interested in joining, contact Deb at 612-804-3188 or [dwriske@gmail.com](mailto:dwriske@gmail.com).
* **RACHEL KURTZ IN CONCERT** with the SW MN Synod youth band: Wed., January 29, Hutchinson Event Center, pizza will be served from 5:45 pm to 6:15 pm (RSVP by Jan. 27 to pastor@riverofhopehutchinson.org), and the concert will be from 6:30 pm to 7:45 pm. Admission is free, and donations are accepted (checks written to River of Hope).
* **FAITH THAT OVERFLOWS 2025:** Registration for GLLM summer programs is open! By registering early, you will not only reserve your place, but you’ll save money too! The Early Bird Discount ends on February 13, 2025! Every registration received before then will receive $65 off each registered program (some restrictions apply.) GLLM scholarships are available for any program including youth camps, and retreat programs. Bethel also has scholarships available, contact Emily Koehler or Pete Hallberg if you are interested. Visit gllm.org for more information and register today! If you have questions, contact the office by phone at 320-796-2181 or email [camp@gllm.org](mailto:camp@gllm.org).
* **CREATIVE SOULS RETREAT, FEBRUARY 7-9, 2025**: Escape the cold and snow and enjoy a cozy weekend of creating! Crafters of all skills and projects are invited to a weekend of dedicated time to create and work on projects. No need to think about meals or dishes, because we have those covered. When you need a break, there is space for a walk, reading a book, or even enjoying a nap. Join us for a weekend filled with whatever your creative soul needs! Register before the deadline-Tuesday, January 28! Visit [gllm.org](http://gllm.org/) for more information and register today!