

Grace Lutheran



Yoked parish of faith and service: Bethel & Zion

Love is spoken here! Be the living Eucharist!



The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?



Third Sunday after Epiphany

January 25th, 2025

*8:45 AM Zion
10:30 AM Bethel*

All are welcome!

The altars of this parish belong to God, and not to us. All people are welcome to participate in every aspect of our worship, including our open table for the Eucharist. We are honored by your presence this day and hope you find peace and refreshment as we celebrate the extravagant love of God, as followers of the Way of Jesus.

We live into the ongoing revelation of Christ! There is a place for you, here!

We Gather

The Holy Spirit calls us in community as people of the Way.

PRELUDE

GREETING

The Grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ, the Love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us always! **And also with you!**

PRAYER OF APPROACH

Let us pray: Lord God, Your Lovingkindness always goes before us and follows after us. Summon us into Your Light, and direct our steps in the ways of goodness that come through the sacrifice of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The congregation stands

GATHERING HYMN

Dearest Jesus, at Your Word

ELW (red book) 520

The congregation is seated

We listen to God's Word

God speaks to us in poetry, creative writing, scripture, preaching & song.

A READING FROM CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18 from *The Message**

St. Paul calls on the Corinthians to end their dissensions and share the unified outlook of the gospel. Discord arises when we forget that we belong not to human leaders or institutions but to Christ. Indeed, the unifying word of the cross of Christ is the center of the gospel and the power of God's salvation.

¹⁰ I have a serious concern to bring up with you, my friends, using the authority of Jesus, our Master. I'll put it as urgently as I can: You *must* get along with each other. You must learn to be considerate of one another, cultivating a life in common.

¹¹⁻¹² I bring this up because some from Chloe's family brought a most disturbing report to my attention—that you're fighting among yourselves! I'll tell you exactly what I was told: You're all picking sides, going around saying, "I'm on Paul's side," or "I'm for Apollos," or "Peter is my man," or "I'm in the Messiah group."

¹³⁻¹⁶ I ask you, "Has the Messiah been chopped up in little pieces so we can each have a relic all our own? Was Paul crucified for you? Was a single one of you baptized in Paul's name?" I was not involved with any of your baptisms—except for Crispus and Gaius—and on getting this report, I'm sure glad I wasn't. At least no one can go around saying he was baptized in my name. (Come to think of it, I also baptized Stephanas's family, but as far as I can recall, that's it.)

¹⁷ God didn't send me out to collect a following for myself, but to preach the Message of what he has done, collecting a following for him. And he didn't send me to do it with a lot of fancy rhetoric of my own, lest the powerful action at the center—Christ on the Cross—be trivialized into mere words.

¹⁸ The Message that points to Christ on the Cross seems like sheer silliness to those hellbent on destruction, but for those on the way of salvation it makes perfect sense.

Response This is the Word of the Lord! **Thanks be to God!**

PSALM 27:1, 4-9

read responsively

¹ The LORD is my light and my salvation; I will fear no one. The LORD protects me from all danger;
I will never be afraid.

I have asked the LORD for one thing; one thing only do I want: to live in the LORD's house all my life, to marvel there at [the Lord's] goodness, and to ask for guidance.

⁵ In times of trouble [the Lord] will shelter me [and] will keep me safe in [the] Temple
and make me secure on a high rock.

⁶ ***So I will triumph over my enemies around me. With shouts of joy I will offer sacrifices in [the] Temple;***

I will sing, I will praise the LORD.

⁷ Hear me, LORD, when I call to You! Be Merciful and answer me!

⁸ ***When you said, "Come worship me," I answered, "I will come, LORD."***

⁹ Don't hide yourself from me! Don't be angry with me; don't turn Your servant away.

You have been my help; don't leave me, don't abandon me, O God, my savior.

The assembly stands to welcome the resurrected Christ!

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW pg. 151

Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

Preface Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus the Christ! ***Glory to you, O Lord!***

A READING FROM THE GOSPELS: Matthew 4:12-17 from *The Message*

¹²⁻¹⁷ When Jesus got word that John had been arrested, he returned to Galilee. He moved from his hometown, Nazareth, to the lakeside village Capernaum, nestled at the base of the Zebulun and Naphtali hills. This move completed Isaiah's revelation:

Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, road to the sea, over Jordan, Galilee, crossroads for the nations.

People sitting out their lives in the dark saw a huge light;

Sitting in that dark, dark country of death, they watched the sun come up.

This Isaiah-prophesied revelation came to life in Galilee the moment Jesus started preaching. He picked up where John left off: "Change your life. God's kingdom is here."

Response The gospel of our Lord! ***Praise to you, O Christ!***

COLLECT

Let us pray; God of all Mercy, Your Son proclaimed good news to the poor, release to the captives, and freedom to the oppressed: anoint us with Your Holy Spirit and set all Your people free to unleash Your Grace in bringing about the Kingdom of Heaven on earth within this generation in the name of Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

The congregation is seated

MESSAGE

Pastor Andrew

The congregation stands

HYMN OF THE DAY

Lord, Take my Hand and Lead Me

ELW 767

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

Though he was divine, he did not cling to equality with God, but made himself nothing.

Taking the form of a slave, he was born in human likeness.

He humbled himself and was obedient to death, even the death of the cross.

Therefore, God has raised him on high, and given him the name above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

A brief silence.

Holy One, You entrust the message of the cross and the mission of the gospel to the church in every land. Guide the newly baptized and deepen the faith of all who follow Christ. Merciful God,

Holy One, receive our prayer.

Holy Creator, You lavish creation with splendor, and we praise You for the gift of life. Teach us to live as wise stewards, sharing the earth's resources with all inhabitants of this garden planet. Merciful God,

Holy One, receive our prayer.

Holy Lover, You care for vulnerable young children, frail elders, and any who are sick (*especially*). We pray for all who are affected by natural disasters. Provide for their needs and relieve their suffering. Merciful God,

Holy One, receive our prayer.

Holy Giver, You gather, forgive, and shape us as disciples of Christ. Nurture in us a spirit of patience and respect, that we may love one another as You Love us. Merciful God,

Holy One, receive our prayer.

Holy Savior, You free us from the power of death. Lead and guide us until we come at last into the communion of all Your saints in Light. Merciful God,

Holy One, receive our prayer.

Lord of the church:

hear our prayer, and make us one in heart and mind to serve You with joy for ever. Amen.

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Let us turn in confession to the One who knows us completely.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Mighty God, lover of justice, ***You call us to life in community, but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors.***

We have sown deceit where honesty was needed.

We say the right words, but our hearts are far from You.

Turn us to seek Your face.

Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love Mercy, and walk humbly with You, our God. Amen.

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers us in the righteousness of Christ, and forgives our sin in † Jesus' name.

May the Spirit give us strength to live for others, and bless us with the gift of peace. ***Amen.***

THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with us always! ***And also with you!***

We share in God's Holy Communion

God feeds us with the risen Christ's presence!

GATHERING OF GIFTS

choir (Auburn)

OFFERTORY

ELW 182

As the gifts of bread, wine, and currency are brought forward, the assembly stands.

Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.

Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.

Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u-nite them with the prayers we offer now.

Grace our ta-ble with Your Pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray: God of majesty, no eye has seen, no ear has heard what You have prepared for those who love You, yet in this meal You reveal the wideness of Your Mercy. Use what we have gathered to feed us with the reign of God come near, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. ***Amen.***

PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

There is a place for you at the table of God. Come, receive the food that does not perish, a taste of life eternal.

LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

Let us turn our hearts unto the Lord of heaven and earth. ***Be mindful of us, dear Lord.***

Fill us with Your Power from on high and set our hearts ablaze. ***It is right to give God thanks and praise!***

We are not generally accustomed to unconditional Grace and Mercy as we have inherited much of our ancient ancestors' mindset of self-preservation at any cost amidst the wilds of earth.

However, Grace and Mercy are the Essence of our Creator who persistently seeks connection with us, and an ongoing maturing of our human condition rooted in the Law of Love, through faith.

Our openness to a wider consideration than base human emotion and permitting Spiritual enlightenment allows our soul to have connection with the Source of our being through which we truly come alive with the capacity to thrive within what is intended as the blessedness of life as a true gift!

Jesus' coming to find and reveal himself to us as the True Humanity, our model for emulating Grace, Mercy and Divine Love through coming to know God's heart, met with both acceptance and denial in his day as in ours; those persons against his revelation of God's Truth revealed corruption and oppression actively seeking and then taking our Lord's physical life. Those persons receiving Jesus' teaching, the revelation of Truth and healing ways always coming to find wholeness and hope.

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

On his last night...

As we offer You this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, we bring before You this bread and this cup and we thank You for counting us worthy to stand in Your Presence and serve You.

Send the Holy Spirit on Your people and gather into one in Your kingdom all who share this one bread and one cup, so that we, in the company of all the saints, may praise and glorify You forever, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory be Yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever. ***Amen.***

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours, now and forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

AGNUS DEI (*Lamb of God*)

ELW pg. 154

- 1) Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.***
- 2) Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.***
- 3) Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.***

THE EUCHARIST

Bread is distributed to the hand by the pastor, individual pre-filled cups of grape juice or wine may be taken from the silver trays: the inner-most ring on each tray is the grape juice.

A gluten-free alternative is available from the Assisting Minister.

Believing in the real presence of Christ, Grace practices open-table, Eucharistic hospitality.

All people, baptized or not, are welcomed to The Meal.

Those who do not wish to commune may come forward for a blessing signified by crossed arms.

COMMUNION HYMN

ELW 336

POST EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Let us pray.; Radiant God, we have seen Your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. In the sacrament of his body and blood You have drawn us to Your heart. Send us from this table with delight, that our lives may reflect the beauty of Your Love, and bear witness to all we have seen and heard, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.

Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, so we and all Your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise Your name; through Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

We go out to serve God

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The congregation stands

BLESSING

May the triune God, who has put a new song in our mouths
and tuned our hearts for praise + bless us now and forever.

SENDING HYMN

O Living Bread from Heaven

ELW 542

DISMISSAL

Go in peace! Do justice, Love Mercy! **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

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IN OUR PRAYERS: Donald Tremblay, Rose Marie Faragoli, Donna Brunnell, Mike & Cindy Dube, Russ Terrien, Tom Toeppner, Sandy Staples, Jim Mooney, Karen Carlson, Judy Garneau, Paul Josephson, Edla Bloom, Steve Hynes, Dennis, Peter & Georgia Kosciusko, Tony Genga, Henry Lewis, Glenna Brownell, Roberta Briggs, Joan Bejune,, Billy Rogan, Don & Judy Leombruno, Samantha Hanks, Mark Glandville, Grace Ray, Jack Fenton, Mark Stevens, Jill Ducat, Jim Mahoney, Amy Runge, Heather Gregar, Kenneth Johnson, Lois Kane, Beth Johnson, Bill Withers, Pr. Judy L., Gary Kaufman, Betty Jane Weagle, Valerie Cotter, Jim Henrickson, Kelly O'Brien Hartnett, Judy Sawicki, Anne Berberian, Carol Katagher, Julie Dawes, Louise Young, Elaine Peterson

Music for January 25, 2026

Prelude: "Adagio Molto" by Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911)

Postlude: "Postlude in C" by Christian Cappelen (1845-1916)

Anthem: "O Jesu So Meek, O Jesu So Kind" words by Valentin Thilo (1607-1662)

Music by J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Today's Music: The text for today's anthem, "O Jesu So Meek, O Jesu So Kind," was written by German scholar Valentin Thilo (1607-1662) and set to one of many chorales by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). Thilo spent 28 years as Professor of Rhetoric at the University of Konigsberg (Germany), the world's second oldest Protestant University, founded in 1544. The prelude is by French organist and composer Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911). Guilmant toured the US in 1904 giving 40 recitals on the world's largest pipe organ at the St. Louis Exposition. The postlude is a composition by Norwegian organist Chistian Cappelen (1845-1916).

END HUNGER MEAL LINES 2026



It's time to kickoff fundraising for this year's End Hunger NE Meal Lines!

We aim to feed 20,000 people this year!

Our goal is to raise \$8000 before May 3, 2026 through several fundraising events.

The Sunday School and Council members will offer submarine sandwiches, available for pickup after service on **February 8th**.

Please fill out and drop off an order sheet of what you would like to order.

This is a free-will offering, payable when you pick up your subs.

Grace Lutheran



Yoked parish of faith and service: Bethel & Zion

MISSION STATEMENT

"To boldly share God's Love and Grace universally in and through our communities."

VISION STATEMENT

Modeling the welcoming nature of God, we are humbly called and driven by the Spirit to witness, engage and walk with each other authentically, as Jesus' hands and feet, providing spiritual, emotional and physical nourishment.

Through evolving partnerships with ecumenical and other social service organizations we affirm justice and wholeness under the "agency of Grace" that feed the needs and hope of all.

The Rev. Andrew H. Borden, Pastor

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Ann Spinner, Parish Administrator

bethelauburn@verizon.net

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Randy Bloom – Minister of Music **Lois Toepfner**, Deacon – Minister of Music Emeritus

Shannon Papandrea - Sexton

Garret Peters - Treasurer

Kate Valleli – Christian Education Coordinator

Adam Hanks – Bell Director

Ann Spinner, Kate Valleli – Financial Secretaries

Marie Sturdevant, Adam Hanks – Lay Worship Leaders: NES Lay School of Theology: Auburn 8 AM, Worcester 2nd Sundays

Parish Council

President – **Dave Valleli (B)** Co-Vice-Presidents – **Jennifer Courtney (Z)**, **Jessica Caminero (B)**

Council – **Dave Spinner (Z)**, **Ruth Thompson (B)**, **Joan Parker (B)**, **Leanne Carraher (B)**

Patrick Jones, (B), **Virginia Carlson, (Z)**, **Adam Hanks (B)**

Worcester Campus - **Zion Lutheran**

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90 Bryn Mawr Avenue, 01501

ReconcilingWorks
LUTHERANS FOR FULL PARTICIPATION



NST
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