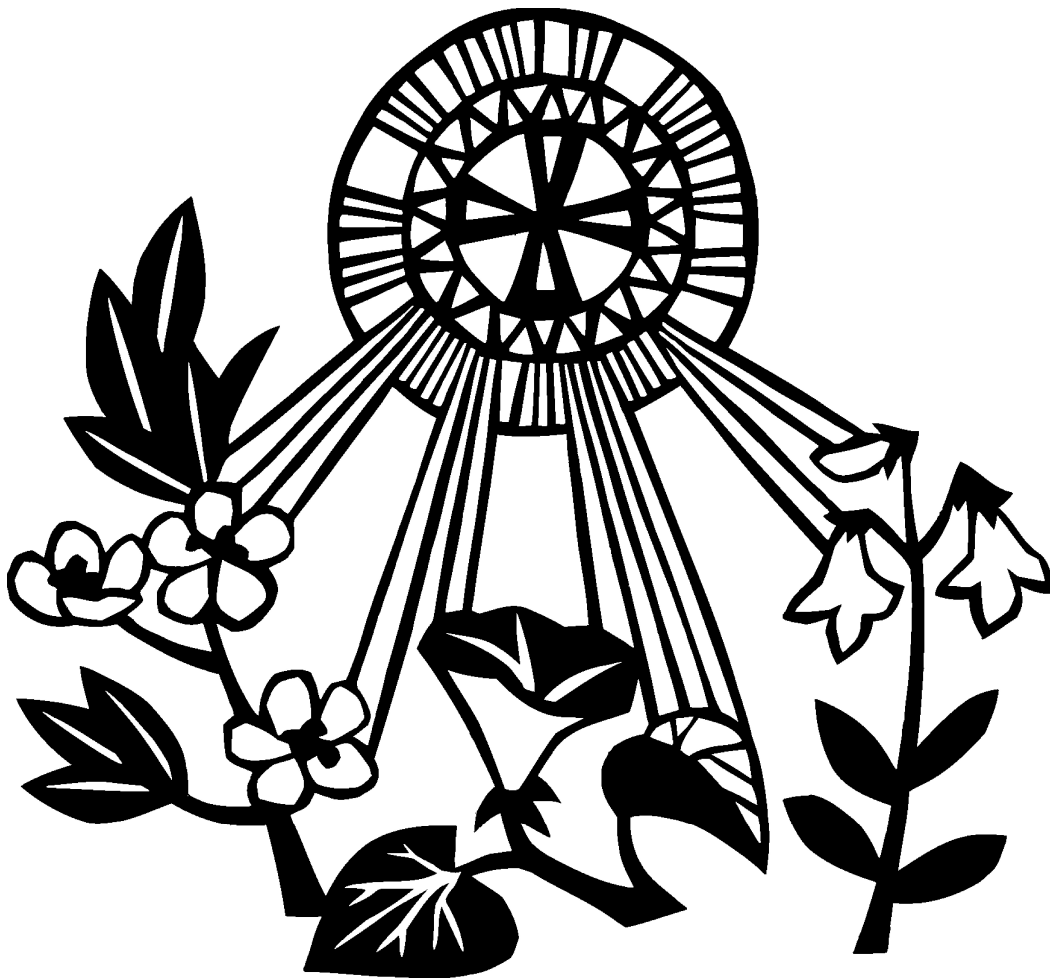


# Grace Lutheran



Yoked parish of faith and service: *Bethel & Zion*

*Love is spoken here! Be the living Eucharist!*



***Sixth Sunday of Easter***

***May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026***

*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 Jesus! There is a place for you, here!*

## We Gather

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

### PRELUDE

*The congregation stands*

### GREETING

The Grace of our Lord Jesus, the Love of God  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. **And also with you.**

### PRAYER OF APPROACH

Let us pray; Almighty and ever-living God, You hold together all things in heaven and on earth. In Your great Mercy receive the prayers of all Your children, and give to all the world the Spirit of Your Truth and peace, through Jesus our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen!**

### GATHERING HYMN

*We Know that Christ is Raised*

ELW (red book) 449

*The congregation is seated*

## We listen to God's Word

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

### A READING FROM THE CHRISTIAN NEW TESTAMENT: Acts 17:22-31a from *The Message*\*

*In Athens, Saint Paul faced the challenge of proclaiming Jesus' teaching to Greeks who knew nothing of either Hebrew or the still forming tradition of Jesus' followers. He proclaimed that the unknown god whom they worshiped is the true Lord of heaven and earth who will deal justly with the world through Jesus, whom God has raised from the dead.*

<sup>22-23</sup> So Paul took his stand in the open space at the Areopagus and laid it out for them. "It is plain to see that you Athenians take your religion seriously. When I arrived here the other day, I was fascinated with all the shrines I came across. And then I found one inscribed, TO THE GOD NOBODY KNOWS. I'm here to introduce you to this God so you can worship intelligently, know who you're dealing with.

<sup>24-29</sup> "The God who made the world and everything in it, this Master of sky and land, doesn't live in custom-made shrines or need the human race to run errands for him, as if he couldn't take care of himself. He makes the creatures; the creatures don't make him. Starting from scratch, he made the entire human race and made the earth hospitable, with plenty of time and space for living so we could seek after God, and not just grope around in the dark but actually *find* him. He doesn't play hide-and-seek with us. He's not remote; he's *near*. We live and move in him, can't get away from him! One of your poets said it well: 'We're the God-created.' Well, if we are the God-created, it doesn't make a lot of sense to think we could hire a sculptor to chisel a god out of stone for *us*, does it?

<sup>30-31a</sup> "God overlooks it as long as you don't know any better—but that time is past. The unknown is now known, and he's calling for a radical life-change.

*Response* Word of God, Word of Life! **Thanks be to God!**

PROVISIONAL\*\* **PSALM 115** interpretation per *The Rev. Christine Robinson*

*read responsively*

O Great Mystery we must love and praise You without understanding.

**You are not a little tin god with eyes that do not see and ears that do not hear  
and a mouth that does not speak.**

You cannot be described or boxed up or tamed.

**You are beyond our understanding.**

Still, we yearn to hear You, know You, feel Your Love, and in mystery, we do.

**We know awe at the intricate majesty of the heavens,**

We cherish the work of caring for each other and the Earth.

**We praise You, Great Mystery, all the days of our lives.**

*The assembly stands to welcome our resurrected Lord!.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW 172

**Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lu-jah. Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lu-jah. Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lu-jah.  
Hal-le-lu-jah. Hal-le-lu-jah.**

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

## A READING FROM THE GOSPELS: John 14:15-21 from the *Pre-Nicene New Testament*

“If you love me, you will observe my commandments. I will petition the Father, and he will give you another [Advocate] to be with you throughout the age, the Spirit of Truth, which the world cannot receive because it does not see it and does not recognize it. You recognize it, though, because he remains with you for now and soon will be inside you. I will not abandon you like orphans, I am coming back to you. Just a little while now and the world will have seen the last of me, but you will behold me because I live and you will live. In that day, you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. The one who has my commandments and keeps them, he is the one who loves me. And the one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and I will manifest myself to him.”

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

## COLLECT

Let us pray; God our Redeemer, You have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of Your Son: grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy; through Jesus Your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen!**

*The congregation is seated*

## MESSAGE

*Pastor Andrew*

*The congregation stands*

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*Come Down, O Love Divine*

ELW 804

*The congregation is seated*

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Let us affirm our faith in Jesus 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 is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Trusting in the Power of Jesus' resurrection to heal and redeem all things, let us pray for the needs of all.

*A brief silence.*

God of new life, You call us through the waters of baptism to be in relationship with You and one another. Guide the church and its leaders to proclaim Jesus' righteousness throughout the world. Merciful God,

**Holy One, receive our prayer.**

You have, and continue, creating amidst all dimensions and time! Shelter budding plants and young animals, provide unpolluted habitats and clean water, and raise up stewards for the environment. Merciful God,

**Holy One, receive our prayer.**

You look for redemptive, distributive justice for Your creation. Instill Truth and equity among judges and lawyers, gentleness and courage among first responders, and peace among leaders of towns and nations. Merciful God,

***Holy One, receive our prayer.***

You provide comfort at all times. Heal those who are sick, shelter the homeless, feed those undernourished and accompany and console all who are lonely, bereaved, anxious, or ill (*especially*). Merciful God,

***Holy One, receive our prayer.***

You embody Love and You desire that we love one another. As a mother hen cares for her chicks, bless all who provide motherly care in our lives, and inspire us to care for one another. Merciful God,

***Holy One, receive our prayer.***

God of new life, Your steadfast Love endures forever. Inspire us by the example of the faithful departed, who cling to Your promises of life, forgiveness of sins, and salvation. 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.***

*The congregation stands*

## **CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION**

Jesus the light of the world has come to dispel the darkness of our hearts. In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our errors.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

***Most Merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus, we confess our errors in thought, word and deed.***

***We have not loved You with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.***

***In Your Mercy forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be; that we may do justly, love Mercy, and walk humbly with You, our God. Amen.***

The Lord enrich us with Grace and nourish us with blessing; the Lord defend us in trouble and keep us from all evil; the Lord accept our prayers and absolve us from our offences, for the sake of † Jesus our Savior. ***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 Jesus' risen Presence*

## **GATHERING OF GIFTS**

*choir*

## **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.***

## **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Let us pray: Merciful God, accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give You glory. You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day when we will hunger and thirst no more. Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus, that goodness and Mercy may follow us and bless the world You love. In the name of Jesus. ***Amen!***

## **PREPARATION OF THE TABLE**

Blessed be God, by whose Grace creation is renewed, by whose Love heaven is opened, by whose Mercy we offer our sacrifice of praise. Blessed be God for ever. ***Amen.***

## **LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT**

The Lord be with you! ***And also with you!*** Open up your hearts! ***We open them up to the Lord!***

Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God! ***It is right to give God thanks and praise!***

Holy God, we come before Your throne in worship this day amazed at Your Grace and Mercy incarnate in the person of Jesus. His life testified to Your commitment with us as Your created children of the human family in loving us despite our tendencies to ignore You in our daily lives.

Your Spirit permeates even the air that we breathe so that Your Presence is infinitely close with us. So, let us join with the song of the angels in heaven, evermore praising Your patient and eternal Love singing together:

**SANCTUS**

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,*

ELW pg. 207

*Heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest.*

*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.*

Embracing our humanity, Jesus showed us the way of salvation despite being rejected by those living in the darkness and hating the light of Truth; loving us to the end, Jesus gave himself over to death, proving in his rising that the world has no power over what God can do.

On his last night our Lord took bread...

Help us, O God, to best follow Your Way according to the law of Love that Jesus' taught.

Bestow Your Holy Spirit upon us through this meal 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, forever 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**

Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord. **Amen.**

**AGNUS DEI** (*Lamb of God*)

ELW pg. 154

*Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.*

*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 781

**POST EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**

Let us pray; God our Father, whose Son Jesus gives the water of eternal life: may we thirst for You, the spring of life and Source of goodness, through him who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen.**

**We go out to serve God**

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*The congregation stands*

**BLESSING**

God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end, Jesus, the firstborn of the dead, and the Spirit, our advocate and peace, + bless us now and for ever. **Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN**

*O Zion, Haste!*

ELW 668

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia! **Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

## POSTLUDE

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\*Scripture translations are in the public domain and sourced through <http://www.biblegateway.com>

**IN OUR PRAYERS:** Donald Tremblay, Rose Marie Faragoli, Donna Brunnell, 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, Joan Bejune, Billy Rogan, Don & Judy Leombruno, Mark Glandville, Jack Fenton, Mark Stevens, Jill Ducat, Jim Mahoney, Tami Briggs, Amy Runge, Heather Gregar, Kenneth Johnson, Lois Kane, Beth Johnson, Pr. Judy L., Gary Kaufman, Betty Jane Weagle, Valerie Cotter, Judy Sawicki, Anne Berberian, Carol Katagher. Julie Dawes, Elaine Peterson, David and Madeline Nevard, Louise Young, Lina Dickey, Courtney Cronin, Theresa Adams, JoAnne Van Dyke, Cherry Harris, Kristen Woods, Diane Ela-Lauzon, Alan Wiinikka

\*\*The **Consultation on Common Texts (CCT)**— a joint American and Canadian ecumenical body—oversees the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), a schedule of biblical passages read on Sundays and festivals in congregations of multiple denominations in North America and other parts of the world. The ELCA is one of more than 20 member denominations.

At its April 2025 meeting, CCT approved a **provisional update** to the RCL. This update reexamines passages of Scripture that have historically been misused to justify discrimination and violence against the Jews. This process involved extensive study and consultation with biblical experts, church historians, and liturgical leaders, including a forum with consultation and participation of Jewish scholars. The ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations was among the groups that offered feedback during this process that helped shape this ecumenical effort.

This proposed update is commended by the CCT to the churches for a **three-year trial period**, beginning in Advent of 2025 (Year A).



### Music for May 10, 2026

**Prelude:** “Andante” by Frank L. Moir (1852-1904)

**Postlude:** “Postlude” by Frank L. Moir (1852-1904)

**Anthem:** “Come Away to the Skies” words and music from *The Southern Harmony*

**Today’s Music:** The prelude and postlude are compositions by 19<sup>th</sup> century English composer Frank L. Moir (1852-1904). Moir’s style represents a typical form and pattern of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although well-known for his ballads, he died in poverty because of changing trends in publishing and musical tastes. In great contrast to Moir’s career, Charles V. Stanford (1852-1924), composer of today’s **GATHERING HYMN**, ranks among the giants of English composers of the same period. Much of Stanford’s music remains as mainstay of both sacred and secular repertoire.

## MEALS FOR 20,000 PEOPLE on May 3<sup>rd</sup>! – THANKS TO ALL



### **ONGOING SERIES – 2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAYS - BEING LUTHERAN**

New/prospective member/current member refresher session

From 9 – 10 AM, at Bethel in his office, Pastor Andrew will host an ongoing participative discussion on what it means to be an ELCA Lutheran amidst the other denominational understandings amongst Jesus followers.

Please speak with Pastor Andrew, or let Ann know, of you plan to attend a session.

# 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  
pastor\_andrew.b@verizon.net

**Ann Spinner**, Parish Administrator  
bethelauburn@verizon.net

Main Office: 508-832-3427  
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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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 Virginia Carlson, (Z), Adam Hanks (B), Donna Hayes (Z)**

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90 Bryn Mawr Avenue, 01501

**ReconcilingWorks**  
LUTHERANS FOR FULL PARTICIPATION



**NST**  
Refugee Accompaniment



Grace  Lutheran  
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