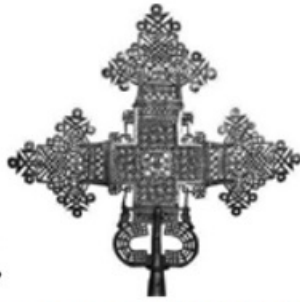
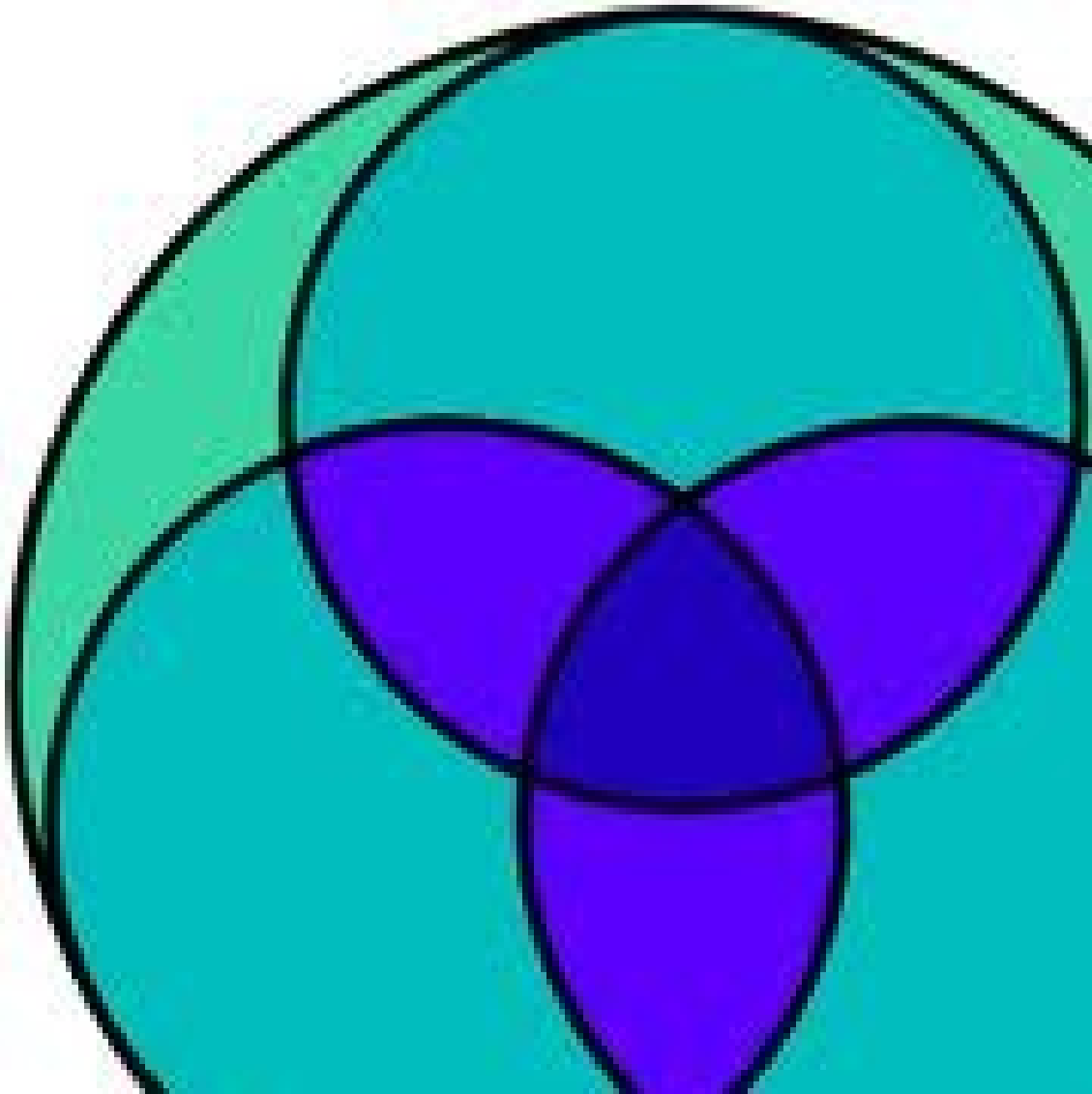


# Grace Lutheran



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

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



***Holy Trinity***

***May 31<sup>st</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

### INTRODUCTION

Though the word *trinity* is not found in the scriptures, today's second reading includes the apostolic greeting that begins the liturgy: *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.* In the gospel Jesus sends his disciples forth to baptize in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. More than a doctrine, the Trinity expresses the heart of our faith: we have experienced the God of creation made known in Jesus and with us always through the Holy Spirit. We celebrate the mystery of the Holy Trinity in word and sacrament, as we profess the creed, and as we are sent into the world to bear witness to our faith.

*The congregation stands*

### CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, Whose compassion endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our errors in living healthy lives that honor God and creation.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Compassionate God, **we confess to You all our error.**

**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 Jesus' 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, our sins are forgiven. Rest in God's Love. **Amen.**

### PRAYER OF APPROACH

Let us pray; God of heaven and earth, before the foundation of the 'verse and the beginning of time You are the triune God: Author of creation, eternal Word of salvation, life-giving Spirit of Wisdom. Guide us to all Truth by Your Spirit, that we may proclaim all that Jesus, as the True Humanity, has revealed and fully rejoice in the glory he shares with us. Glory and praise to You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen!**

### GATHERING HYMN

*Holy God, We Praise Your Name*

ELW (red book) 414

*The congregation is seated*

## We listen to God's Word

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

**A READING FROM HEBREW SCRIPTURE (*Tanakh*):** Genesis 18:1-14 from the NIV\*

The LORD appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. <sup>2</sup>Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground.

<sup>3</sup>He said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord do not pass your servant by. <sup>4</sup>Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree. <sup>5</sup>Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way—now that you have come to your servant."

“Very well,” they answered, “do as you say.”

<sup>6</sup> So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. “Quick,” he said, “get three seahs of the finest flour and knead it and bake some bread.”

<sup>7</sup> Then he ran to the herd and selected a choice, tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it. <sup>8</sup> He then brought some curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them. While they ate, he stood near them under a tree.

<sup>9</sup> “Where is your wife Sarah?” they asked him.

“There, in the tent,” he said.

<sup>10</sup> Then one of them said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son.”

Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. <sup>11</sup> Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. <sup>12</sup> So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, “After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?”

<sup>13</sup> Then the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child, now that I am old?’ <sup>14</sup> Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son.”

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

## BELL ANTHEM

### PSALM 8

*read responsively*

O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is Your Name in all the earth!

You have set Your glory above the heavens.

<sup>2</sup> ***Out of the mouths of babes and infants You have founded a bulwark because of Your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger.***

<sup>3</sup> When I look at Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars that You have established;

<sup>4</sup> ***what are humans that You are mindful of them, mortals that You care for them?***

<sup>5</sup> Yet You have made them a little lower than God and crowned them with glory and honor.

<sup>6</sup> ***You have given them dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under their feet,***

<sup>7</sup> all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,

<sup>8</sup> ***the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.***

<sup>9</sup> O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is Your Name in all the earth!

*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: Matthew 28:16-20 from the NRSVUE\*

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshiped him, but they doubted. <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

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

## COLLECT

Let us pray; Holy God, faithful and unchanging: enlarge our minds with the knowledge of Your Truth, and draw us more deeply into the mystery of Your Love, that we may truly worship You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. ***Amen!***

*The congregation is seated*

## MESSAGE

Pastor Andrew

*The congregation stands*

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*Come, Join the Dance of Trinity*

ELW 412

*The congregation is seated*

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

We say together in faith

***Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.***

We believe in God the Father, who created all things:

***for by his will they were created and have their being.***

We believe in God the Son, who was slain:

***who revealed the Power that is God to help those from every tribe and language, from every people and nation, overcome chaos and be whole no matter what.***

We believe in God the Holy Spirit:

***the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!' Even so come, Lord Jesus! Amen.***

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray for the church and the needs of the world.

*A brief silence.*

Holy God, we are in awe of Your creative work. Continue that work in Your believers, making us a new creation that proclaims Your Presence and Love. God of Grace,

***Holy One, hear our prayer.***

Creator God, nature reveals Your Power and glory. Protect water sources, vegetation, and wildlife as reminders of who You are. God of Grace,

***Holy One, hear our prayer.***

Redeemer God, You call us to pray for those in authority. Guide our leaders to pursue the work of fostering peace and community. God of Grace,

***Holy One, hear our prayer.***

Sustaining God, You are mindful of Your people in every circumstance. Heal those who are sick. Provide for all who hunger. Protect those in harm's way. Comfort any experiencing hardship (*especially*). God of Grace,

***Holy One, hear our prayer.***

Gracious God, we pray for the children of our parish and the communities we support. Provide for their needs. Support their caregivers. Nurture their faith. God of Grace,

***Holy One, hear our prayer.***

Loving God, we give thanks for those who have died and claimed their baptismal promises. Strengthen us to live as they did in communion with You. God of Grace,

***Holy One, hear 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*

## 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.***

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Let us pray: Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of Your Love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share Your Love freely, as You have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and for ever. **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 our Lord took bread ...

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

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 167

## POST EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Let us pray; Almighty and eternal God, You have revealed Yourself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and live and reign in the perfect unity of Love: hold us firm in this faith, that we may know You in all Your ways and evermore rejoice in Your eternal glory, who are three Persons yet one God, now and for ever.

***Almighty God, we thank You for feeding us with the body and blood of Your Son Jesus. Through him we offer You our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice. Send us out in the power of Your Spirit to live and work to Your praise and glory. Amen.***

## **We go out to serve God**

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

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

*The congregation stands*

## BLESSING

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, † one God, bless, heal, and hold us today and always. **Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN

*Holy, Holy, Holy*

ELW 413

## DISMISSAL

Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news! ***Thanks be to God!***

## 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 Toepfner, 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, Mark, Misty Johnson, Peter Karl

## **COTTAGE MEETINGS - PARISH VOTING > returning to being a PASTORAL TEACHING CHURCH**

*Following a couple months of deliberation, your Parish Council voted unanimously on May 17th to encourage our parish in returning as an internship site for training new pastors!*

Both of congregations hosted pastoral interns (vicars) on multiple occasions in past years. The thought is to do so again beginning in 2027. *United Lutheran seminary is EXCITED that a yoked parish, such as ours, could be coming "online" to help train-up leaders for multi-congregational settings in the ELCA!*

Vicars are student pastors, learning "on the job" under the tutelage of the parish pastor, and in consultation with an ELCA seminary. Our parish would provide the Vicar housing and a stipend for the year that they are assigned to Grace.

## **MEETINGS TO DISCUSS AND THEN VOTE ON THE OPPORTUNITY**

Wednesday, June 3rd after 5:30 PM Worship

Sunday, June 7th following each worship: 8 AM, 8:45 AM & 10:30 AM

## Music for May 31, 2026

**Prelude:** "Andante Sostenuto" by Flor Peeters (1903-1986)

**Postlude:** "Postlude in G" by Gustav Merkel (1827-1885)

**Anthem:** "Cast Thy Burden upon the Lord" by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

**Today's Music:** Today's anthem is a brief chorus from Felix Mendelssohn's monumental oratorio *Elijah*, composed in 1846, a year before his death. Mendelssohn's setting of Psalm 55:22 emphasizes calm and confidence through its harmonies and beautiful melody in great contrast to other conflicts and strife of the story of Elijah portrayed through solos and choruses.

## **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.

## **BISHOP PIPHO IS COMING**

Our Synod bishop makes every effort to visit all the parishes in New England and is booked most weeks to be a part of worship somewhere (when he is not traveling for meetings and conferences).

Mark your calendars! Bishop Piphoh will be with us for both the 8:45 AM service in Worcester and 10:30 AM service in Auburn the last Sunday of July, the 26th! Each campus will host some "coffee-and" time following the worships so you may meet him directly.

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL** - Wow, we are entering our 3rd year back in providing this wonderful, summer opportunity!

Mornings, the week of August 3rd @ our Auburn Campus of Bethel

We are working in partnership with Emanuel Lutheran - Worcester and First Congregational Church of Auburn!

**ECUMENICAL HAPPENINGS** - There is an *energy* taking place, the **Spirit** *is* moving! Coming off of the recent healing service held at Salem Covenant, our ecumenical clergy have planned three more services for this year:

Sunday, August 23rd - Summer Ecumenical Service (time & location TBA)

Sunday, November 22nd - Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service: 4 PM @ The Unitarian Universalist Church of Worcester

Thursday, December 17th - Ecumenical Blue Christmas Service: 7 PM @ our Zion campus in Worcester

**Come, share the Spirit, never just for Pentecost :)**

# 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

**grace-lutheran-elca.org**

**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)**

Worcester Campus - Zion Lutheran  
41 Whitmarsh Avenue, 01606

Auburn Campus - Bethel Lutheran  
90 Bryn Mawr Avenue, 01501

**ReconcilingWorks**  
LUTHERANS FOR FULL PARTICIPATION



**NST**  
Refugee Accompaniment



Grace  Lutheran  
Café

