

# Grace Lutheran



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

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

# Grace

# תּוֹסַת



**15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity**

**September 13<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*

### **CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who pours Love into our hearts and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**  
Confident that God makes us right by Grace through faith, let us confess our errors in sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Compassionate God, **we confess that we struggle to embody Your goodness in the world and in our own hearts.**

**Creation groans from overuse.**

**Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.**

**Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.**

**Divisions disrupt Your call to us for our embodying genuine Love to others.**

**Turn our hearts back to You, we pray. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.**

**Renew us to live as Your holy people, following the Way of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Hear this good news: We have peace with God through ☩ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of Grace. **Amen.**

### **GREETING**

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, 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; God, who in generous Mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon Your people in the burning fire of Your Love: grant that we may be constantly attentive within the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in You, we may be found committed in faith and active in service; through Jesus Christ 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!**

### **GATHERING HYMN**

*All Creatures, Worship God Most High  
Verses 1-4*

ELW (red book) 835

*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 50:15-21 from *The Message*\*

*After Jacob's death, his sons beg their brother, Joseph, for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.*

<sup>4-15</sup> After burying his father, Joseph went back to Egypt. All his brothers who had come with him to bury his father returned with him. After the funeral, Joseph's brothers talked among themselves: "What if Joseph is carrying a grudge and decides to pay us back for all the wrong we did him?"

<sup>16-17</sup> So they sent Joseph a message, "Before his death, your father gave this command: Tell Joseph, 'Forgive your brothers' sin—all that wrongdoing. They did treat you very badly.' Will you do it? Will you forgive the sins of the servants of your father's God?"

When Joseph received their message, he wept.

<sup>18</sup> Then the brothers went in person to him, threw themselves on the ground before him and said, "We'll be your slaves."

<sup>19-21</sup> Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid. Do I act for God? Don't you see, you planned evil against me but God used those same plans for my good, as you see all around you right now—life for many people. Easy now, you have nothing to fear; I'll take care of you and your children." He reassured them, speaking with them heart-to-heart.

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

## PSALM HYMN

please see page 7

*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 now the gospel of our Lord! **Glory to you, O Lord!**

## A READING FROM THE GOSPELS: Matthew 18:23-34 from *The Message*\*

<sup>23-25</sup> "The kingdom of God is like a king who decided to square accounts with his servants. As he got under way, one servant was brought before him who had run up a debt of a hundred thousand dollars. He couldn't pay up, so the king ordered the man, along with his wife, children, and goods, to be auctioned off at the slave market.

<sup>26-27</sup> "The poor wretch threw himself at the king's feet and begged, 'Give me a chance and I'll pay it all back.' Touched by his plea, the king let him off, erasing the debt.

<sup>28</sup> "The servant was no sooner out of the room when he came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him ten dollars. He seized him by the throat and demanded, 'Pay up. Now!'

<sup>29-31</sup> "The poor wretch threw himself down and begged, 'Give me a chance and I'll pay it all back.' But he wouldn't do it. He had him arrested and put in jail until the debt was paid. When the other servants saw this going on, they were outraged and brought a detailed report to the king.

<sup>32-34</sup> "The king summoned the man and said, 'You evil servant! I forgave your entire debt when you begged me for mercy. Shouldn't you be compelled to be merciful to your fellow servant who asked for mercy?' The king was furious and put the screws to the man until he paid back his entire debt.

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

## COLLECT

Let us pray; Lord God, defend Your followers from all false teaching and give to Your people knowledge of Your Truth, that we may embody Grace and enjoy whole life through Jesus Christ our Lord the True Humanity. **Amen!**

*The congregation is seated*

## MESSAGE

Pastor Andrew

*The congregation stands*

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*Our Father, We Have Wandered*

ELW 606

*The congregation is seated*

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Reminded of God's Gracious and abundant Love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

*A brief silence.*

Move Your followers throughout the world away from judging and despising others. Lead us to embody the forgiveness You have given us in Jesus. God of Grace,

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

The endless beauty of Your creation reminds us of Your Mercy. Protect those who care for farms and ranches. Guide those who lead us to wonder at Your creation. God of Grace,

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

Raise up leaders (*like John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, whom we remember today*) to hold all in authority accountable for any misuse of the power entrusted to them. God of Grace,

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

Calm the fears of all in need with Your promises. Compassionately free the lives of any who feel bound by their failures. Remember Your children in need (*especially*). God of Grace,

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

Ground this parish in the welcome You show us in forgiving our sin, through Jesus, resurrecting our lives every day! Inspire each of us to welcome others for Your honor and glory. God of Grace,

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

With You is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember all those who have gone before us. 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 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

## 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: O God, maker of heaven and earth, Your steadfast Love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the heart of Your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. ***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!***

Most Merciful Lord, Your Love compels us to come in. Our hands have been unclean, our hearts are not fully prepared; we are not fit even to eat the crumbs from under Your table. But You, Lord, are the God of our salvation, and share Your bread with sinners.

So, cleanse and feed us with the precious body and blood of Your Son, that he may live in us and we in him; and that we, with the whole company of Christ, may sit and eat in Your kingdom.

✠ On his last night with the disciples...✠

We pray You, Gracious God, to send Your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the sacrament of the body of Christ and his blood of the new covenant. Unite us to Your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable in Your sight, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under Your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all Your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of Your daughters and sons; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is Yours, Almighty Father, now and forever. **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

The gifts of creation for God's beloved creatures. Come and share.

### 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 482

### POST EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Let us pray: O Lord, keep Your followers with Your perpetual Mercy; and, because without You our human frailty cannot but fall, keep us ever by Your help and through Your Grace from all things hurtful, leading us toward all wholeness and hope through the resurrecting Power revealed in Jesus 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

The God of Love draw us into full accord and one mind,  
in the body of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

The God of hope grant us strength and joy in all circumstances  
through the interceding of the Spirit. **Amen.**

The God of Grace ☩ bless us now and forever. **Amen.**

### SENDING HYMN

*Praise the Lord, Rise Up Rejoicing*

ELW 544

### DISMISSAL

Go out in joy and be led forth in peace! **Thanks be to God!**

### POSTLUDE

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

**LUTHERAN & CHURCH HISTORY SESSIONS** These 2nd Sunday opportunities to learn what it means to be "Lutheran" and why the "church" in Jesus' name has so many versions of being church, will commence again on September 13th :)

**IN OUR PRAYERS:** Donald Tremblay, Rose Marie Faragoli, Donna Brunnell, Russ Terrien, Sandy Staples, Jim Mooney, Judy Garneau, Paul Josephson, Edla Bloom, Steve Hynes, Peter Kosciusko, Tony Genga, Henry Lewis, Glenna Brownell, Billy Rogan, 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, Anne Berberian, Carol Katagher. Julie Dawes, Elaine Peterson, David Nevard, Paul Vallelle, Louise Young, Lina Dickey, Courtney Cronin, Theresa Adams, Cherry Harris, Kristen Woods, Diane Ela-Lauzon, Alan Wiinikka, Mark, Misty Johnson, Peter Karl, Jane Moir, Nancy & Paul Cater, Shirley Connor, Sheela Fisher, Bill, Judy Maritz, Stormy, Karen Carlson, Christine Miller, Tiggy White, Jackie Blais, Lisa Johnson

### Music for September 13, 2026

**Prelude:** "Allegro moderato" from *Sonata I* by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

**Postlude:** "Allegro vivace" from *Sonata I* by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

**Anthem:** "Now Let Us All Praise God and Sing" by Gordon Young (1919-1998)

**Today's Music:** "Now Let Us Praise God and Sing" is an anthem by 20<sup>th</sup> century American organist and composer, Gordon Young (1919-1998). Born in Kansas, Young served as organist and music director at First Presbyterian Church in Detroit for 15 years and composed over 800 works for organ, choral, and church.

The prelude and postlude are movements from Felix Mendelssohn's (1809-1847) *Sonata I* for organ. The first movement, today's prelude, incorporates a German Lutheran chorale tune, reflecting both Mendelssohn's respect for J. S. Bach (1685-1750) and also his family's conversion to Christianity when Felix was the age of seven.

### Adult Courses Fall '26

Wednesdays, 2 PM Library, Bethel Campus

#### Beginning September 16th

Historical elements relating to Jesus' life & times, and those of his mother. Reference books:

The Lost Mary, James D. Tabor, 2025, Knopf

The Jesus Discovery, James D. Tabor & Simcha Jacobovici, 2013, Simon & Schuster

#### October 7th

The purpose of scripture. Reference texts:

2 Timothy 3:16-16 Ephesians 2:4-8

#### Beginning October 14th

Exploring the sometimes "dark" moments of life and finding God still present, moving us towards something new.

Reference book:

Gifts of the Dark Wood, Eric Elnes, 2015, Abingdon Press

**The first 10 who sign up receive the book, free 😊**



## AUBURN WALK FOR HUNGER



For the Benefit of  
Auburn Youth and Family Services Food Pantry  
and Kateri's Kitchen

### Sunday, September 27th

Walk begins @ 1:00 at 21 Pheasant Court, Auburn, MA 01501  
with registration @ 12:30

Please bring a non-perishable food item for the food pantry.

Scan the QR code to make an online donation

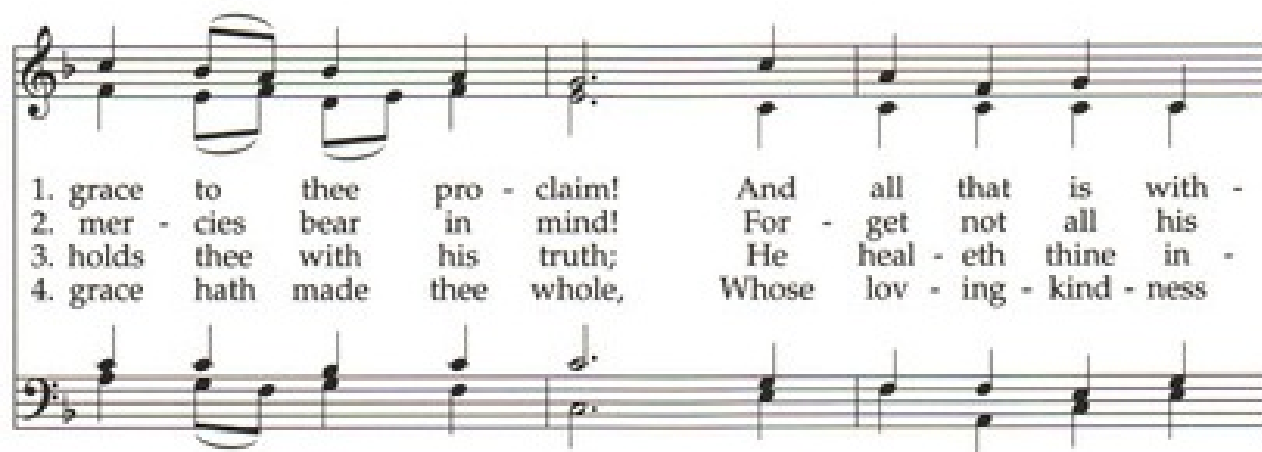


# O Bless the Lord, My Soul

ST. THOMAS (WILLIAMS) SM



1. O bless the Lord, my soul! His  
 2. O bless the Lord, my soul! His  
 3. He clothes thee with his love; Up -  
 4. Then bless his ho - ly name, Whose



1. grace to thee pro - claim! And all that is with -  
 2. mer - cies bear in mind! For - get not all his  
 3. holds thee with his truth; He heal - eth thine in -  
 4. grace hath made thee whole, Whose lov - ing - kind - ness



1. in me join To bless his ho - ly name!  
 2. ben - e - fits! The Lord to thee is kind.  
 3. fir - mi - ties And ran - soms thee from death.  
 4. crowns thy days! O bless the Lord, my soul!

James Montgomery, 1771-1854

Aaron Williams, 1731-1776  
 Harm. by Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

# Grace Lutheran



Yoked parish of faith and service: Bethel & Zion

**Weekly Worships: Wednesdays 5:30 PM (B), Sundays 8 AM (B), 8:45 AM (Z), 10:30 AM (B)**

## 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](mailto:pastor_andrew.b@verizon.net)

**Ann Spinner**, Parish Administrator

[bethelauburn@verizon.net](mailto:bethelauburn@verizon.net)

Main Office: 508-832-3427

**[grace-lutheran-elca.org](http://grace-lutheran-elca.org)**

**Randy Bloom** – Minister of Music

**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

