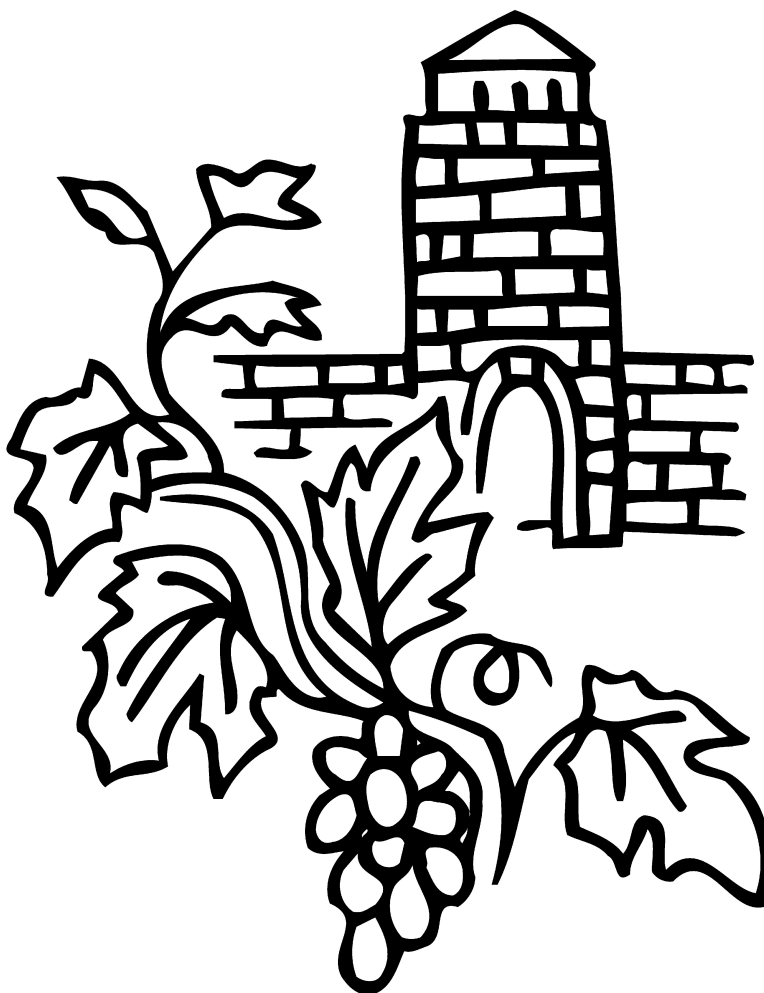


Grace Lutheran



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

Love is spoken here! Be the living Eucharist!



18th Sunday after Trinity

October 4th, 2026

8:45 AM Zion
10:30 AM Bethel

All who honor the Spirit of Grace 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.**

St Paul says 'Be imitators of God; love as Christ Loved; do not grieve the Holy Spirit; put away all anger and bitterness, all slander and malice.' So let us confess our sins to God, who forgives us in Christ.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Father eternal, giver of Light and Grace, we have committed errors, sinning against you and against our neighbor, in what we have thought, in what we have said and done, through ignorance, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault.

We have wounded Your Love, and marred Your image in us. We are sorry and ashamed, and repent of all our sins.

For the sake of Your Son Jesus Christ, who died to reveal the way forward in life through Your Power, forgive us all that is past; and lead us out from darkness to walk as children of Light. 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; Beloved God, from You come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of Your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by Your Merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen!**

GATHERING HYMN

God Is Here!

ELW (red book) 526

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: Philippians 3:4b-14 from the GNT*

Paul reviews some of his supposed credentials, which no longer have any bearing in comparison to the right relationship he has been given through the death of Christ. The Power of Christ's resurrection motivates him to press on toward the ultimate goal, eternal life with Christ.

^{4b}I could, of course, put my trust in [human wisdom]. If any of you think you can trust in external ceremonies, I have even more reason to feel that way. ⁵I was circumcised when I was a week old. I am an Israelite by birth, of the tribe of Benjamin, a pure-blooded Hebrew. As far as keeping [Temple] Law is concerned, I was a Pharisee, ⁶and I was so zealous that I persecuted [Jesus' followers]. As far as a person can be righteous by obeying the commands of the Law, I was without fault. ⁷But all those things that I might count as profit I now reckon as loss for Christ's sake. ⁸Not only those things; I reckon everything as complete loss for the sake of what is so much more valuable, the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have thrown everything

away; I consider it all as mere garbage, so that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be completely united with him. I no longer have a righteousness of my own, the kind that is gained by obeying the Law. I now have the righteousness that is given through faith in Christ, the righteousness that comes from God and is based on faith. ¹⁰ All I want is to know Christ and to experience the power of his resurrection, to share in his sufferings and become like him in his death, ¹¹ in the hope that I myself will be raised from death to life.

¹² I do not claim that I have already succeeded or have already become perfect. I keep striving to win the prize for which Christ Jesus has already won me to himself. ¹³ Of course, my friends, I really do not think that I have already won it; the one thing I do, however, is to forget what is behind me and do my best to reach what is ahead. ¹⁴ So I run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to the life above.

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

PSALM 80 *interpretation per The Rev. Christine Robinson*

read responsively

Hear me, O God, for I am missing You

Restore in me the Light of Your Presence.

Hear my prayers. Heed the cry of my open heart.

You nourished a seed growing there—prepared the ground and planted it.

It grew large enough to fill the whole landscape!

But now—the busy boar has ravaged it

The beasts of doubt have fed on it.

The slings and arrows are outrageous.

Look upon your servant, O God—Help me tend and preserve my ravaged heart.

Let Your hand be on me—whom You once called to You and made strong.

Give my faith life again, so I can call on Your Name with a whole heart.

Hear my prayers—heed the cry of my open heart.

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: Thomas 65:1-7 from the *Scholars Edition*

[Jesus] said, A person owned a vineyard and rented it to some farmers, so they could work it and he could collect its crop from them. He sent his slave so the farmers would give him the vineyard's crop. They grabbed him, beat him, and almost killed him, and the slave returned and told his master. His master said, "Perhaps he didn't know them." He sent another slave, and the farmers beat that one as well. Then the master sent his son and said, "Perhaps they'll show my son some respect." Because the farmers knew that he was the heir to the vineyard, they grabbed him and killed him.

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

COLLECT

Let us pray; God, our guide, protector and savior, teach us to be open to Your Truth and to trust in Your Love, that we may live each day with confidence in the encouragement through faith which is given through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen!**

The congregation is seated

MESSAGE

Pastor Andrew

The congregation stands

HYMN OF THE DAY

Lead Me, Guide Me

ELW 768

The congregation is seated

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Seeking the Spirit of God who makes all things new, we pray for the church and the world.

A brief silence.

God of every generation, we give thanks for all who have been led to renew and transform Your holy church (*especially Theodor Fliedner, renewer of society*). Inspire us to follow their example. God of Grace,

Holy One, hear our prayer.

God of every creature, we pray that You continue in blessing and protecting the earth and all those who dwell within it. We give thanks for those who have helped us to see Your Spirit in creation (*especially Francis of Assisi, renewer of the church*). God of Grace,

Holy One, hear our prayer.

God of every tribe and nation, restore peace to the world's conflict zones (*such as Haiti, Afghanistan, The Sudan, Palestine, The Ukraine, and Mesopotamia*), and shelter those who live within them. We pray especially for the safety of displaced people and refugees. God of Grace,

Holy One, hear our prayer.

God of every comfort, You made us in Your own image. Grant healing and relief to all who are sick or suffering (*especially*). God of Grace,

Holy One, hear our prayer.

God of every Truth, You draw us nearer to You through Your holy Word. We give thanks for teachers of the faith (*such as our Christian Education staff*). Fill their hearts with Your Spirit, that they inspire others with Your Truth. God of Grace,

Holy One, hear our prayer.

God of every soul, You are the one who calls us home. We give thanks for all the saints who have been restored to perfect unity 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 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: God of creation, You send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from You; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to You and in love to our neighbors, today and always. ***Amen!***

PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

God so Loved the world that the only begotten Son was given, that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ***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!***

It is indeed right, it is our duty and our joy, at all times and in all places to give You thanks and praise, holy Father, heavenly King, almighty and eternal God, through Jesus Christ Your Son our Lord. For he is Your living Word; through him You have created all things from the beginning, and formed us in Your own image.

To You be glory and praise forever.

Through him You have freed us from the slavery of sin, giving him to be born of a woman and to die upon the cross; You raised him from the dead and exalted him to Your right hand on high.

To You be glory and praise forever.

Through him You have sent upon us Your holy and life-giving Spirit, and made us a people for Your own possession.

To You be glory and praise forever.

Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim Your great and glorious name, forever praising You and singing:

SANCTUS

WOV pg. 36



Accept our praises, heavenly Father, through Your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and as we follow his example and obey his command, grant that by the Power of Your Holy Spirit these gifts of bread and wine may be to us his body and his blood.

To You be glory and praise forever.

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

Therefore, heavenly Father, we proclaim Jesus' mighty resurrection and glorious ascension proving Your Power available to us in overcoming chaos; we look for the coming of Your kingdom, and with this bread and this cup we make the memorial of Christ Your Son our Lord. Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died: Christ is risen: Christ will come again!

Through him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, with all who stand before You in earth and heaven, we worship You, Father almighty, in songs of everlasting praise:

Blessing and honor and glory and power be Yours 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

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

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 595

POST EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Let us pray: We praise and thank you, O Christ, for this sacred feast: for here we receive you, here the memory of your passion is renewed, here our minds are filled with Grace, and here a pledge of future glory is given, when we shall feast at that table where you reign with all your saints 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 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

Thine the amen

ELW 826

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>

WE WELCOME TODAY Karen Couturier as our musician! Karen served Grace principally as organist for our Zion campus a number of years ago and is now a member of Trinity Lutheran in Worcester. Please welcome and thank her for the sharing of her gifts this day!

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 Valleli, 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, Judy Leombruno, Jackson, Kathryn Sirven, Lisa Morrissey, Dave Sutton

NOTE REGARDING SCRIPTURE USAGE: *Our denomination is an exegetical (Spirit-led) tradition in that we preach and teach according to the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), a three-year cycle of recommended texts primarily used within main-line denominations as inspiration; Eastern and Western rites of Catholicism use a variant. As such, Church of England second and third service texts within the RCL are also valid. The Book of Q (Sayings Gospel), The Gospel of Thomas and The Gospel of Mary Magdalene may also be used when their material is found to be more historically accurate to what scholarship has uncovered as the way Jesus would have addressed his disciples and hearers against what the canonical writers adjusted/appended at times for the teaching of their ancient congregations.*

Ecumenical Adult Study Series

Restarting on Tuesday Evening, October 6th for 7 AM via Zoom

Interfaith Afterlives of Jesus – Jesus in Global Perspective 2

The book of the same name will be our guide and may be obtained through Westar Institute, or just join in the conversations with people from our ecumenical partners online!

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

Beginning October 7th

The purpose of scripture. Reference texts:

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

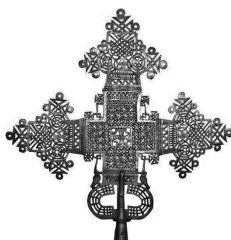
Beginning October 14th

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 ☺



Grace Lutheran is like an inn for anyone looking for a place to relax. A united religious community embodying:

- environments in which people are free to search for what faith following *The Way* of Jesus can mean for them today;
- congregations that give space to 'own' ways of believing, stimulating uninhibited reading of bible stories, teaching that works to help each of us uncover and reveal the Essence of Grace and Mercy that are God;
- communities of the faithful that are open and affirming of all people looking for spirituality and the meaning of religion in our culture and society, providing opportunities for ways of living in service with creation through the engagement and expression of one's talents and gifts.

God is good, all the time! All the time, God is indeed good!

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

Ann Spinner, Parish Administrator

bethelauburn@verizon.net

Main Office: 508-832-3427

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 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**

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

