

Grace Lutheran



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

Love is spoken here! Be the living Eucharist!



20th Sunday after Trinity

October 18th, 2026

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.**

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 sharing Your genuine Love with others.

Turn our hearts back to You.

Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.

Renew us to live as Your holy people, following the Way of Jesus. 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, the giver of life, whose Holy Spirit wells up within the followers of Jesus: by the Spirit's gifts equip us to live the teachings and example of Jesus, making us eager to do Your will, that we may share with the whole creation the joys of eternal life; 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

You Servants of God

ELW (red book) 825

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: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-9 from the NRSVUE*

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

¹ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only but also in Power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy from the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For they report about us what kind of welcome we had among you and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God.

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

PSALM 96 *interpretation per The Rev. Chrstine Robinson*

read responsively

Sing a new song to the Holy One with all the names and none.

Proclaim our joy and thanksgiving for creation, for life, for growth, for love.

Turn your face to the light. Rejoice in God.

Worship God in the beauty of holiness let the whole earth tremble in awe.

Call out—There's this beautiful world and all the life in it.

and there's the rule of law in our hearts and Love at the heart of it All.

The heavens rejoice

The earth dances

The seas roil with life

The fields are glad

The trees of the wood shout for joy.

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 100:1-3 from the *Scholars Edition*

They showed Jesus a gold coin and said to him, "The roman emperor's people demand taxes from us."

[Jesus] said to them, "Give the emperor what belongs to the emperor, give God what belongs to God."

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

COLLECT

Let us pray; God, our Light and our salvation: illuminate our lives, that we may see Your goodness in the land of the living, and looking on Your beauty may be changed into the likeness of Your son, Jesus. **Amen!**

The congregation is seated

MESSAGE

Pastor Andrew

The congregation stands

HYMN OF THE DAY

Take My Life, That I May Be

ELW 583

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.

Living and true God, You inspire us to share the message of the gospel. Give Your Spirit of Love to seminarians at United Lutheran Seminary and those beginning their lives in ordained ministry. God of Grace,

Holy One, hear our prayer.

We give You thanks for the majesty of our oceans. Protect the abundant life within them and sustain all those who work to preserve them. God of Grace,

Holy One, hear our prayer.

We seek Your Wisdom in all things. Direct all who hold positions of authority around the world, that they act with compassion, seeking the good of all. God of Grace,

Holy One, hear our prayer.

We pray for all people who work in dangerous or degrading environments. Grant them safety and courage, and heal all those who are injured, sick, or suffering (*especially*). God of Grace,

Holy One, hear our prayer.

We ask Your blessing on those who do the quiet, unseen work of the church. Encourage them in their work of faith and labor of Love. God of Grace,

Holy One, hear our prayer.

We thank You for our ancestors who have been called home to 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

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!***

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 690

POST EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Let us pray: God our Father, whose son, the Light unfailing, has come from heaven to deliver the world from the darkness of ignorance: let these holy mysteries open the eyes of our understanding that we may know the Way of life, and walk in it without stumbling; through 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

God of Grace and God of Glory

ELW 705

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>

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, Louise Young, Lina Dickey, Courtney Cronin, Theresa Adams, Cherry Harris, Kristen Woods, Diane Ela-Lauzon, Alan Wiinikka, Mark, Misty Johnson, Peter Karl, 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, Miriam Bove

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/append at times for the teaching of their ancient congregations.

Music for October 18, 2026

Prelude: "Andante Tranquillo" from *Sonata III* by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Postlude: "Maestoso" from *Sonata III* by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Anthem: "Come, Labor On" words by Jane Borthwick (1813-1897) Music by T. Tertius Noble (1867-1953)

Today's Music: The prelude and postlude are from one of the six organ sonatas by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) composed for the British audience following a successful recital tour. The postlude is a portion of the first movement of *Sonata III* which Mendelssohn used as a processional for his sister Fanny's (1807-1847) wedding. Today's anthem is an Anglican hymn with text by Jane Borthwick (1813-1897) urging Christians to diligent service and perseverance. The tune is ORA LABORA by English-born organist and composer, T. Tertius Noble (1867-1953). Late in his career, Noble served St. Thomas Church (NYC).

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 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!



REFORMATION, 10/25

***We will confirm Mira Velleli and Chase Hunt at
the 10:30 AM Service***

Followed in Voosen Hall by:



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



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