

BETHEL  
LUTHERAN

E.L.C.A.

G R O V E C I T Y

15<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost  
September 1, 2024

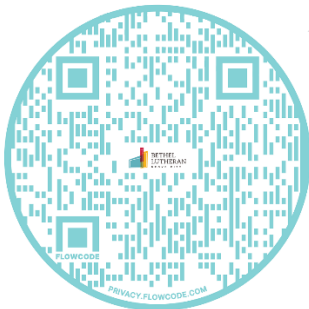
Worship Service 10:00 A.M.

Welcome

to Bethel Lutheran

We extend special greetings to all our guests who are with us today. Your presence, along with our members and friends, is truly valued. Know that all of God's people are always welcome here at Bethel.

If you would like to know more about Bethel Lutheran, her pastor, the Rev. Peter I. Ray, or any of the parish's programs and activities, please contact the church office (875-0510). You may also check out our website by scanning the QR code below. Again, welcome; and may you have a blessed week!



## About Bethel Lutheran Church

Bethel has been serving the Grove City community since 1968, ministering to its members and friends, supporting Lutheran Social Services programs like Faith Mission and LSS Food Pantry.

Bethel is in partnership with nearly 9,000 sister congregations, 26 Lutheran colleges (including Capital University, Bexley and Wittenberg, Springfield), 7 seminaries (including Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Bexley), 240+ world-wide missionaries in more than 40 countries and non-profit social services network, Lutheran World Relief...all ministries of the 4-million-member **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (E.L.C.A.)**. Bethel Lutheran Church is also home to The Amazing Kids Academy Preschool, Stephen Ministries, AA groups, as well as other community organizations.

Bethel Lutheran Church is a member of Pride in Grove City.

## Welcome

We, the members of Bethel Lutheran Church, Grove City, Ohio, believe the following statement represents our commitment and desire to reach out and welcome those in need of and searching for God's love.

***We believe we are all created in God's image and are all called to love our neighbors as Jesus loves us. We believe we are many members, but one body in Christ, and called to unite all people in God's love. We welcome and affirm all people. We invite those who are seeking God's presence in their lives to join us in our common journey. Our faith community seeks to unite persons of all ages, races, nationalities, ethnic background, sexual orientations, gender identities, mental and physical abilities, socioeconomic levels, and theological backgrounds. Together in our diversity, and being empowered and directed by the Holy Spirit, we will continually strive to "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God." (Micah 6:8)***

## Worship and young children

All children are welcome in worship. They are a valued part of this faith community.

In addition, Bethel's Nursery (for children up to approximately four years of age) has paid staff at both services. This is available to meet the needs of your family and the worshiping needs of the congregation.

We have a "Parentseeker" paging system for optimal communication between nursery and parents worshiping in the sanctuary.

Children's bulletins are also available in the narthex for younger children to help them make age-appropriate connections with our weekly themes.

Bethel has video monitors in the narthex and hallways if your child gets restless.



Jesus protests against human customs being given the weight of divine law, while the essence of God's law is ignored. True uncleanness comes not from external things, but from the intentions of the human heart. Last week Jesus told us "the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (John 6:63). Now James says God has given us birth by the word of truth. We who were washed in the word when we were born in the font return to it every Sunday to ask God to create in us clean hearts.

- ❖ Quiet reverence before the liturgy allows prayer and meditation
- ❖ Please do not bring food or drinks into the Sanctuary during Worship
- ❖ Throughout the service, **C** means the congregation responds as the **bold print** indicates.
- ❖ As a worship courtesy, **please silence or turn off** all cellular phones and other communication devices during the service.

# Gathering

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### PRELUDE

*(please stand and face the baptismal font)*

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
who forgives all our sin,  
whose mercy endures forever.

C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin and come to God for healing.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P Gracious God,

C have mercy on us.

We confess that we have honored you with our lips,  
but have harmed our neighbors with our tongues.  
The cravings at war within us cause conflicts and disputes.  
In our desire to be first we make distinctions among ourselves.  
We place the needs of the poor and the suffering last.  
In your great mercy, forgive us our sins.  
Draw near to us with grace in time of need,  
and turn us to follow in the way of Jesus Christ,  
our Savior and Lord.  
Amen.

P God promises to forgive our iniquity  
and to remember our sin no more.  
By grace you have been saved.  
In the name of † Jesus Christ,  
the source of eternal healing,  
your sins are forgiven.

C Amen.

**OPENING HYMN**

*Awake, My Soul, and With The Sun*

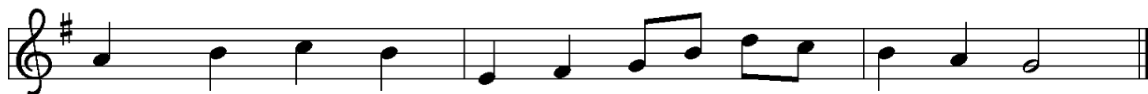
ELW #557



1 A - wake, my soul, and with the sun thy  
2 All praise to thee, who safe hast kept and  
3 Lord, I my vows to thee re - new. Dis -  
4 Di - rect, con - trol, sug - gest, this day, all  
5 Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise



dai - ly stage of du - ty run; shake off dull sloth, and  
hast re - freshed me while I slept. Grant, Lord, when I from  
perse my sins as morn - ing dew; guard my first springs of  
I de - sign or do or say, that all my pow'rs, with  
God, all crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye



joy - ful rise to pay thy morn - ing sac - ri - fice.  
death shall wake, I may of end - less light par - take.  
thought and will; and with thy - self my spir - it fill.  
all their might, in thy sole glo - ry may u - nite.  
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

**APOSTOLIC GREETING**

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

## PRAAYER OF THE DAY

P O God our strength, without you we are weak and wayward creatures.

Protect us from all dangers that attack us from the outside, and cleanse us from all evil that arises from within ourselves, that we may be preserved through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

*(please be seated)*

## CHILDREN'S TIME

Gathering • Word • Meal • Sending

# Word

### FIRST READING

**Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9**

*The Israelites believed the law was a divine gift that provided guidelines for living out the covenant. Moses commands the people to obey the law and to neither add to nor subtract from it. The Israelites are also to teach the law to their children and their children's children.*

<sup>1</sup>So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. <sup>2</sup>You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God with which I am charging you.

<sup>6</sup>You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!" <sup>7</sup>For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is whenever we call to him? <sup>8</sup>And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today?

<sup>9</sup>But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children.

P The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

## PSALM

## Psalm 15

<sup>1</sup>Lord, who may dwell in your | tabernacle?

Who may abide upon your | holy hill?

<sup>2</sup>Those who lead a blameless life and do | what is right,  
who speak the truth | from their heart;

<sup>3</sup>they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil | to their friends;  
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

<sup>4</sup>In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who | fear  
the Lord.

They have sworn upon their health and do not take | back their word.

<sup>5</sup>They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes  
against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be | overthrown.

## SECOND READING

## James 1:17-27

*The letter of James was intended to provide first-century Christians with instruction in godly behavior. Here Christians are encouraged to listen carefully and to act on what they hear, especially by caring for those least able to care for themselves.*

<sup>17</sup>Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. <sup>18</sup>In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.



<sup>19</sup>You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; <sup>20</sup>for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. <sup>21</sup>Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

<sup>22</sup>But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. <sup>23</sup>For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; <sup>24</sup>for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. <sup>25</sup>But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

<sup>26</sup>If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. <sup>27</sup>Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

*(please stand, as able)*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the



words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

P The Holy Gospel according to Mark.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

## **GOSPEL**

**Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23**

*Mark's gospel depicts Jesus as challenging traditional ways in which religious people determine what is pure or impure. For Jesus, the observance of religious practices cannot become a substitute for godly words or deeds that spring from a faithful heart.*

<sup>1</sup>Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around [Jesus], <sup>2</sup>they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. <sup>3</sup>(For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; <sup>4</sup>and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) <sup>5</sup>So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" <sup>6</sup>He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

'This people honors me with their lips,  
but their hearts are far from me;  
<sup>7</sup>in vain do they worship me,  
teaching human precepts as doctrines.'

<sup>8</sup>You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition."

<sup>14</sup>Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand: <sup>15</sup>there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.

<sup>21</sup>"For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, <sup>22</sup>adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. <sup>23</sup>All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

(please be seated)

SERMON

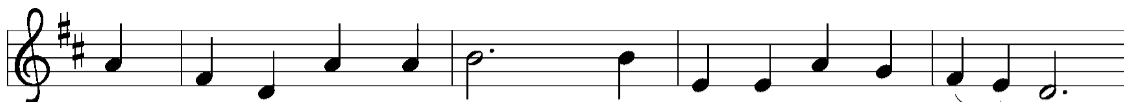
Rev. Monte Stevens

(please stand, as able)

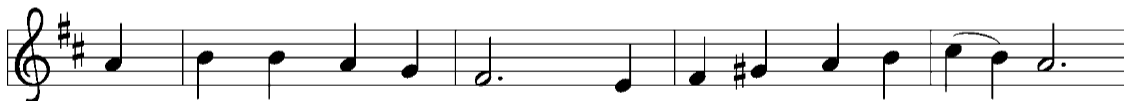
HYMN OF THE DAY

Oh God, My Faithful God

ELW #806



1 O God, my faith - ful God, true foun-tain ev - er flow - ing,  
2 Give me the strength to do with read - y heart and will - ing  
3 Keep me from say - ing words that lat - er need re - call - ing;  
4 When dan-gers gath - er round, oh, keep me calm and fear - less;



with - out whom noth-ing is, all per - fect gifts be - stow - ing:  
what - ev - er you com-mand, my call - ing here ful - fill - ing—  
guard me, lest i - dle speech may from my lips be fall - ing;  
help me to bear the cross when life seems dark and cheer-less;



give me a health - y frame, and may I have with - in  
to do it when I ought, with all my might—and bless  
but when, with - in my place, I must and ought to speak,  
help me, as you have taught, to love both great and small,



a con - science free from blame, a soul un - stained by sin.  
what - ev - er I have wrought, for you must give suc - cess.  
then to my words give grace, lest I of - fend the weak.  
and, by your Spir - it's might, to live at peace with all.

## APOSTLES' CREED

- C** I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.
- I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
- I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

- P** Drawn together in the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray with confidence for  
the church, God's good creation, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

- P** God of every generation, give the church a sense of purpose and belonging.  
Sustain and build up leaders and lay people as we accompany one another  
in our life with Christ. Merciful God,
- C** Receive our prayer.

P God of creation, you named humans as co-creators with you. Where the earth cries out in pain, bring wholeness. Guide governments and industry, that environmental laws and practices seek to heal and not harm. Bring relief and justice to people and places suffering from climate catastrophe (*especially*). Merciful God,

**C Receive our prayer.**

P Sovereign God, we pray for local communities of every kind: rural and urban; established and new. Lead those in authority to seek the good of all through their words and actions and to mentor others in honest and generous ways. Merciful God,

**C Receive our prayer.**

P Healing God, you draw near to all who are hurting. Be with all who desire relief from chronic and acute illness, cancer, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Strengthen health care workers, therapists, and caregivers. Tend to those who are close to our hearts (*especially*). Merciful God,

**C Receive our prayer.**

P On this Labor Day weekend we remember and give thanks for all who have fought for workers' rights around the world. Continue to improve working conditions and establish fair wages so that all people may thrive. Merciful God,

**C Receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

P Comforting God, console us as we mourn our departed (*especially*). We hold fast to the promise that death has been defeated by our Savior Jesus Christ. Merciful God,

**C Receive our prayer.**

P We entrust these and all our prayers to you, holy God, in the name of your beloved child, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**C Amen.**

# Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

## SHARING OF THE PEACE

**P** The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C** And also with you.

*(You may share a sign of God's peace such as a handshake, wave, hug or other appropriate greeting.)*

*(please be seated)*

## OFFERING

*An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, and the care of those in need. If you are a first-time visitor, it is our privilege to have you worship with us. Please do not feel the need or obligation to give a financial offering. Your presence is gift enough to God and to us.*

Our members and friends have the privilege to participate in faithful financial stewardship. Scan the QR Code below where you can give electronically.



*(please stand, as able)*

## OFFERTORY RESPONSE



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless - ing. 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 the dreams of all; u -  
nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your  
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

A Blessed are you, O God,  
source of every gift of your creation.  
By these gifts and with our lives,  
help us to serve one another and all in need,  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

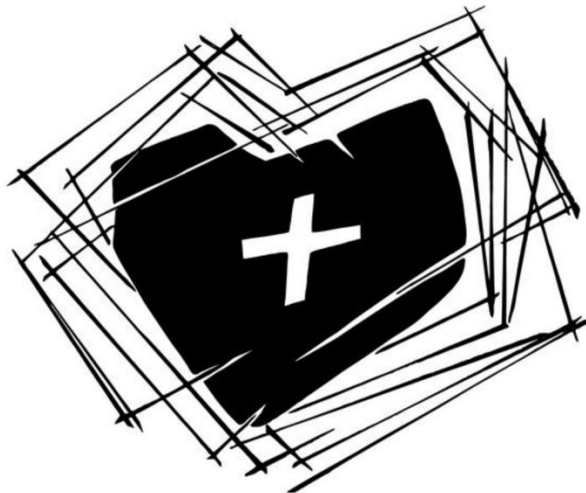
# THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.





## PREFACE

It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,  
al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ;  
who on this day overcame death and the grave,  
and by his glorious resur - rec - tion  
opened to us the way of ev - er - last - ing life.  
And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,  
we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

## SANTUS (Holy, Holy, Holy)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -



san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

## EUCHARIST PRAYER

P Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,  
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,  
who preached good news to the poor,  
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,  
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,  
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,  
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be all honor and glory, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:**

**C Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Jesus welcomes you to this table.  
Come, here is your God.

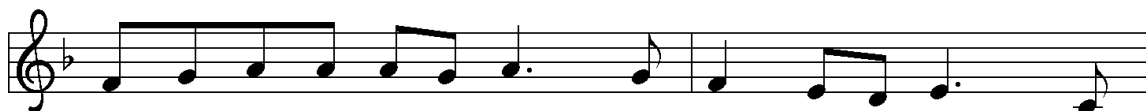
C Amen.

*(please be seated)*

## COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Bethel welcomes to the Lord's table all baptized Christians who believe that Christ is truly present in the bread and wine of this meal. Children and adults who want to receive a blessing instead of bread and wine may cross their arms over their chest as they come forward. All are welcome!

## AGNUS DEI (Lamb of God)



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.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN     *Lord, Who the Night You Were Betrayed*     ELW #463



1 Lord, who the night you were be - trayed did pray that all your  
 2 For all your church on earth, we in - ter - cede; Lord, make our  
 3 And hear our prayer for wan-d'ers from your fold; re - store them,  
 4 So, Lord, at length when sac - ra - ments shall cease, may we be



church might be for - ev - er one: help us at  
 sad di - vi - sions soon to cease; draw us all  
 too, Good Shep - herd of the sheep, back to the  
 one with all your church a - bove— one with your



ev - 'ry eu - cha - rist to say with will - ing heart and  
 clos - er, each to each, we plead, by draw - ing all to  
 faith your saints con - fessed of old, and to the church still  
 saints in one un - bro - ken peace, one with your saints in



soul, "Your will be done." Oh, may we all one bread, one  
 you, O Prince of peace; thus may we all one bread, one  
 pledged that faith to keep. Soon may we all one bread, one  
 one un - bound - ed love; more bless - ed still, in peace and



bod - y be, through this blest sac - ra - ment of u - ni - ty.  
 bod - y be, through this blest sac - ra - ment of u - ni - ty.  
 bod - y be, through this blest sac - ra - ment of u - ni - ty.  
 love to be one with the Trin - i - ty in u - ni - ty.

*(please stand, as able)*

## **PASTORAL COMMENDATION**

**P** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ  
strengthen and keep you in his grace.

**C** **Amen.**

## **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

**A** Holy God,  
you have welcomed us to this meal  
and fed us with dignity at your table.  
Send us now to welcome others  
and to be at peace with one another,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C** **Amen.**

Gathering • Word • Meal • Sending

# Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission out into the world.

## **BLESSING**

**P** God all mighty,  
God most merciful  
✠ bless you, keep you,  
and give you peace.

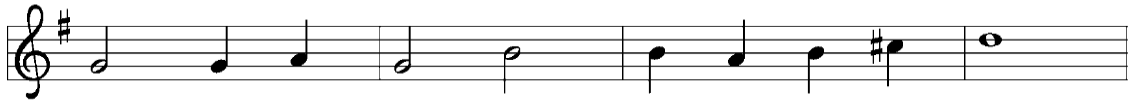
**C** **Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN****Savior, Again To Hear Your Dear Name**

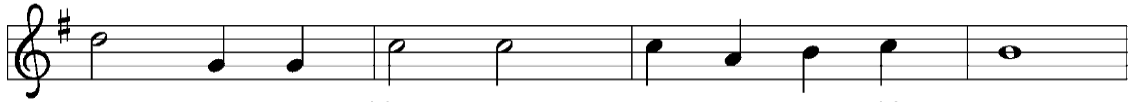
ELW #534



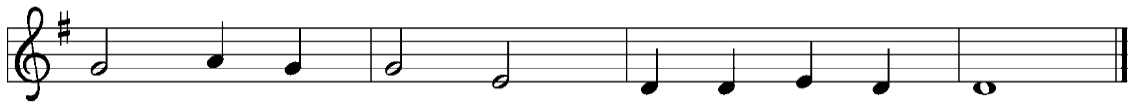
1 Sav - ior, a - gain to your dear name we raise  
 2 Grant us your peace up - on our home - ward way;  
 3 Grant us your peace, Lord, through the com - ing night;  
 4 Grant us your peace through - out our earth - ly life,



with one ac - cord our part - ing hymn of praise;  
 with you be - gan, with you shall end the day;  
 for us trans - form its dark - ness in - to light.  
 our balm in sor - row, and our stay in strife;



once more we bless you ere our wor - ship cease,  
 guard all the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,  
 Keep us from harm and dan - ger till the dawn;  
 then, when your voice shall bid our con - flict cease,



then, low - ly bend - ing, wait your word of peace.  
 that in this house have called up - on your name.  
 your eve - ning pres - ence prom - ise to your own.  
 call us, O Lord, to your e - ter - nal peace.

**DISMISSAL**

A Go in peace. Follow Jesus.

C Thanks be to God.

**POSTLUDE**

## Bethel's Staff

**Lead Pastor: The Rev. Peter I. Ray**

**Care & Visitation Pastor: The Rev. Jeffrey N. Wise**

**Organist/Director of Music: Ward Matthias**

**Pianist/Associate Musician: Ruth Hiles**

**Director of Choirs: Bree Johnson**

**Youth Coordinator: Jennifer Bueter**

**Nursery Director: Crystal Smith**

**Pre-School Directors: Jennifer Bueter & Cathy Tallman**

**Church Administrator: Cathy Tallman**

**Retired/Resource Pastors: The Rev. Wil Hallman**

**The Rev. Andrew Mazak**

**The Rev. Joe Stark**

### A Land Statement

*"We acknowledge that we gather as Bethel Lutheran Church on the traditional land of the Shawnee and Ofo and Kaskaskia Peoples past and present, including the Adena/Hopewell Cultures, and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. This calls us to commit to continuing to learn how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit as well."*