



Bethlehem Lutheran Church & Early Childhood Center



Season After Pentecost

August 16, 2026

Worship Services

9:00 am | 10:30 am

Welcome to Bethlehem!

We hope you feel a warm welcome here at Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Please visit our website at www.blcenc.org for more information about the congregation. If you are visiting with us, please fill out an information card and place it in the offering basket so we can stay connected.

CHILDREN

All children are welcome in the sanctuary for worship at Bethlehem. If you prefer, there is a comfort room at the back of the sanctuary. Busy bags and activity baskets are available in the narthex. Learning circles are on hiatus for the summer months.

COMMUNION

We practice **open communion**, meaning all are welcome to participate. We commune by intinction where the pastor dips the bread into a divided chalice with white wine or red grape juice. There is a gluten-free station on the left side of the sanctuary. We are happy to bring communion to individuals with limited mobility.

PARTICIPATION & ACCESSIBILITY

The different movements that happen during worship (sitting, standing, making the sign of the cross) are all optional; please engage as you are comfortable or able. Hearing assistance devices are located at the back of the sanctuary and large-print bulletins are available in the narthex. If you, or someone you know, identify as neurodivergent and have questions about how to participate in worship or in one of our church ministries, please feel free to ask either the pastors or the church office for help.

PRAYER

In addition to the pastors, our Stephen Ministers are always available to pray with you about whatever is on your heart this day. Please look for the folks wearing a blue name tag with the Stephen Ministry logo. Healing prayer stations are available during communion on the second Sunday of each month.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Photo Credit: <https://christchurchepiscopal.org/stormin-bit-of-good-trouble/>

GATHERING

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

L: We are gathered today in the name of the Creator, the Christ, and the Comforter.

C: Amen.

L: Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

L: Merciful God,

C: You free us to love others, but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way. You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace, but we turn away from the abundant life you offer. You surround us with patience, kindness, and mercy, yet we grow weary in doing what is right. In your mercy, forgive us. Do not give up on us. Heal us, break our bonds, and show us the path of life.

L: You belong to Christ Jesus, and you are God's children. In the cross of ✝ Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation.

C: Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

God, We Gather As Your People – ACS 1038



1 God, we gath - er as your peo - ple to raise our song a -
2 Oh, we sing for all the chil - dren, that one day they be



bove, and we dare to claim the prom - ise of your love.
free; and we sing for gen - er - a - tions yet to be,



Though the day may not yet be here, we
that they nev - er have a rea - son to



trust it soon will be, when your chil - dren will be free.
doubt that they are blest. May they, in your love, find rest.

Refrain



Oh, may our hearts and minds be o - pened, fling the church doors o - pen



wide. May there be room e - nough for ev - 'ry - one in - side.



For in God there is a wel - come, in God we all be -



long. May that wel - come be our song.

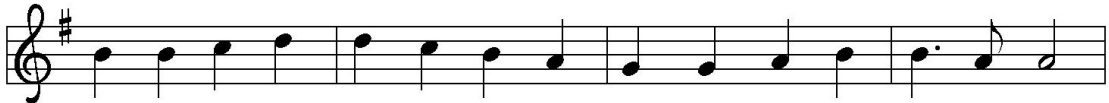
GREETING

L: 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.

HYMN OF PRAISE

“Glory Be to God” – ELW pg. 204 vs. 3



- 1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.
- 2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
- 3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:
Son of God and gra - cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;
Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.
Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.
For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Let us pray ...

C: Amen.

CHILDREN'S TIME (10:30 AM)

WORD

SCRIPTURE READING

Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

R: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW pg. 205



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav-ing word.



Let it burn like fire with-in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 15:21-28

R: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Laura Ziehl



1 Build a long - er ta - ble, not a high - er wall,
 2 Build a saf - er ref - uge, not a larg - er jail;
 3 Build a broad - er door - way, not a long - er fence.
 4 When we lived as ex - iles, ref - u - gees a - broad,



feed - ing those who hun - ger, mak - ing room for all.
 where the weak find shel - ter, mer - cy will not fail.
 Love pro - tects all peo - ple, spar - ing no ex - pense.
 Christ be - came our door - way to the reign of God.



Feast - ing to - geth - er, strang - er turns to friend,
 For an - y place where jus - tice is de - nied,
 When we em - brace com - pas - sion more than fear,
 So must our ta - bles wel - come those who roam.



Christ breaks walls to piec - es; false di - vi - sions end.
 Christ will breach the jail wall, free - ing all in - side.
 Christ tears down our fenc - es; all are wel - come here.
 None can be ex - clud - ed; all must find a home.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

L: Lord in your mercy,

C: **Hear our prayer.**

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

L: The peace of the Lord be with you always,

C: **And also with you!**

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Morning Prelude” – JuBellation Ringers

OFFERTORY RESPONSE

We Are an Offering – ELW 692

The musical score is written on six staves in treble clef. It features a mix of eighth, quarter, and half notes, with some triplets indicated by a '3' over the notes. The lyrics are written below the staves, aligned with the corresponding notes.

We lift our voic-es, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you: we are an
of-fer-ing. Lord, use our voic-es, Lord, use our hands, Lord, use our
lives, they are yours: we are an of-fer-ing. All that we have, all that we are,
all that we hope to be, we give to you, we give to you.
We lift our voic-es, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you:
we are an of-fer-ing, we are an of-fer-ing.

MEAL

GREAT THANKSGIVING & WORDS OF INSTITUTION

L: The Lord be with you,

C: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts,

C: We lift them to the Lord.

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

ELW pg. 112

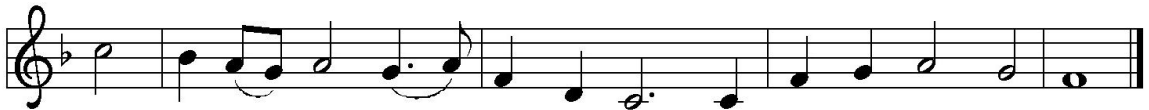
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the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

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

Lamb of God – ELW pg. 208 vs. 3



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service – ELW 712



1 Lord, whose love in hum-ble ser - vice bore the weight of hu-man need,
 2 Still your chil-dren wan-der home-less; still the hun - gry cry for bread;
 3 As we wor-ship, grant us vi - sion, till your love's re - veal-ing light
 4 Called by wor-ship to your ser - vice, forth in your dear name we go,



who up - on the cross, for - sak - en, worked your mer-cy's per - fect deed:
 still the cap - tives long for free - dom; still in grief we mourn our dead.
 in its height and depth and great-ness dawns up - on our quick-ened sight,
 to the child, the youth, the a - ged, love in liv - ing deeds to show;



we, your ser - vants, bring the wor-ship not of voice a - lone, but heart;
 As you, Lord, in deep com-pas - sion healed the sick and freed the soul,
 mak-ing known the needs and bur - dens your com-pas-sion bids us bear,
 hope and health, good-will and com - fort, coun - sel, aid, and peace we give,



con - se - crat - ing to your pur - pose ev - 'ry gift which you im-part.
 by your Spir - it send your pow - er to our world to make it whole.
 stir-ring us to ar - dent ser - vice, your a - bun-dant life to share.
 that your ser - vants, Lord, in free-dom may your mer - cy know and live.

SENDING**ANNOUNCEMENTS****BLESSING**

SENDING HYMN

In Christ There Is No East or West – ELW 650



- 1 In Christ there is no east or west, in him no south or north,
- 2 In Christ shall true hearts ev-'ry-where their high com-mu-nion find;
- 3 Join hands, dis-ci-ples of the faith, what-e'er your race may be.
- 4 In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north;



but one com-mu-ni-ty of love through-out the whole wide earth.
his ser-vice is the gold-en cord close bind-ing hu-man-kind.
All chil-dren of the liv-ing God are sure-ly kin to me.
all Christ-ly souls are one in him through-out the whole wide earth.

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace, share the Good News!

C: Thanks be to God!

All Are Welcome!

We live in a diverse world. We are hurting, broken and heavy hearted. We are loving, joyous, and above all, we are welcoming. Regardless of the color of your skin, or the color of your hair; regardless of your gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, relationship status, or political affiliation, you are welcome here. We honor indigenous people and are committed to the work of anti-racism and the stewardship of the creation.

If you are Buddhist, Roman Catholic, agnostic, Muslim, Jewish, seeking, have never set foot in a church, or are a life long Lutheran; you have a place here. If you own, rent, or have nothing at all; you are welcome here. If you are neurodivergent, fully abled, disabled, or a person of differing abilities; if you have regrets, fears, addictions, or afflictions; you have a place here.

All who are wise and all who are confused, all who have found love and all who have lost it, all who celebrate this welcome statement and all who fear it - are welcome here.

Come as you are and be celebrated for who you are. Your place is here. Bethlehem Lutheran is an All are Welcome church.



Reconciling in Christ



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Electronic Giving at Bethlehem

Offering gifts can be made electronically on our website **www.blcenc.org** under the contribute tab, or by scanning this QR code. There are options for one-time donations, recurring gifts, and special offerings. **No account is needed to donate on our website.**



You can also use the **Vanco Mobile App**. Simply download it from your app store, and search "Bethlehem Lutheran Church Encinitas" by name (there is no invite code). If you already have an account from our website, the same login information will work. If not, please sign up with a new account. **Thank You for Supporting Bethlehem!**



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