



Bethlehem Lutheran Church & Early Childhood Center



Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 8, 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 are available in the narthex. After Children's Time at our **10:30 AM** service children ages 3 years – 6th grade may either attend our Learning Circle program or remain with you.

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: Nicodemus Visits Jesus" by Henry Osawa Tanner (1899)

GATHERING

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters.

C: Amen.

L: Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

Silence is kept for reflection.

L: Mighty God, lover of justice,

C: You call us to life in community, but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors. We have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God.

L: The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ, and forgives your sin in ✝ Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace.

C: Amen.

GATHERING SONG

"Blessed Be Your Name" – Redman

**Blessed be your Name, in the land that is plentiful
Where your streams are of abundance flow – Blessed be your Name.**

**Blessed be your Name, when I'm found in the desert place
Though I walk thru the wilderness – Blessed be your Name.**

Chorus

**Every blessing you pour out I turn back to praise.
And when the darkness closes in, Lord, still I will say:
Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Blessed be your Name.
Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Blessed be your glorious Name.**

**Blessed be your Name, when the sun is shining down on me
When the world's all as it should be – Blessed be your Name.**

**Blessed be your Name, on the road marked with suffering
Though there's pain in the offering – Blessed be your Name.**

Repeat Chorus

**You give and take away. You give and take away.
My heart will choose to say, Lord, blessed be Your Name.**

Repeat Chorus

**Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Blessed be your Name.
Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Blessed be your glorious Name.**

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Let us pray ...

C: Amen.

CHILDREN'S TIME (10:30 AM)

WORD

SCRIPTURE READING

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

R: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

“Thy Word” – Grant

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

**I will not forget Your love for me and yet my heart forever is wandering
Jesus be my guide, and hold me to Your side – I will love You to the end**

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

GOSPEL READING

John 3:1-17

R: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Laura Ziehl

**Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take Him at His Word;
Just to rest upon His promise,
Just to know, "Thus saith the Lord!"
Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er;
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
Oh, for grace to trust Him more!**

**I'm so glad I learned to trust Him,
Precious Jesus, Savior, Friend;
And I know that He is with me,
Will be with me to the end.
Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er;
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
Oh, for grace to trust Him more! (Repeat x 2)**

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

“Give You Me” – Cardenas

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 FROM THE NEW ZEALAND PRAYER BOOK

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and testing, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever.
Amen.

Hear the good news, you've been invited.
No matter what others may say,
Your darkest sins will be forgiven.
You will always have a place.

Chorus:

At the table of grace, the cup's never empty,
The plate's always full, and it's never too late,
To come and be filled with love never ending.
You're always welcome at the table of grace.

So come you weak, and heavy hearted, and heavy hearted.
Don't try to hide your earthly scars.
For in His eyes, we all are equal, yes, we are.
Don't be afraid, come as you are.

Repeat Chorus

So let the first become the last.
Let the poor put kings to shame.
Their willing hearts will be their treasure.
By the power of Jesus' name.

Repeat Chorus x2

Everyone's welcome at the table of grace.

SENDING

SENDING SONG

“Lead on Good Shepherd” – Mayberry

Well, I've been turned 'round, but I've never been lost.
Seen the water get troubled, but we walked across.
When my knees were shaking, You held my hand,
Turning my problems to a promised land

Chorus:

Lead on, Good Shepherd – I'll follow all my days.
There ain't nothing sweeter than to watch You make a way.
You've walked me through the valley, but You never steered me wrong
So lead on good shepherd, lead on.

Seen some mighty deep canyons that You brought me through.
Seen some mighty big mountains that just up and moved.
Glory, glory hallelujah, yeah, that's my song.
Walking with my Father into the great unknown

Repeat Chorus

Step by step, day by day, lead me on, Lord I pray.
Road gets dark, walk by faith, lead on, good shepherd. *(Repeat)*

Repeat Chorus

Step by step, day by day, lead me on, Lord I pray.
Road gets dark, walk by faith, lead on, good shepherd. *(Repeat)*

Lead on, Good Shepherd *(Repeat x4)*

Lead on

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace, return to the Lord!

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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