



## THE FEAST OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church  
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Mrs. Kristen Lawson, Organist

**WELCOME IN THE NAME OF OUR BLESSED LORD!** We are pleased you are here, gathered around the Gospel in Preaching and the Sacraments! **GUESTS** – If we can assist you in any way with questions about our confession of faith, spiritual struggles, understanding our liturgical service, or any other need, please let us know. It is our prayer that the Gospel of Jesus Christ will strengthen and comfort you.

**CONFESSIONAL STATEMENT:** Bethany Lutheran Church confesses all the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired word of God without any errors. We also hold, without any reservation, to the teachings of the Evangelical-Lutheran Confessions contained in the 1580 Book of Concord. We confess these teachings to be the correct interpretation of Scripture and a true explanation of the one, holy, catholic (universal) and apostolic faith.

**PASTORAL CARE AND GUESTS AT THE LORD'S SUPPER:** Scripture and our Confessions teach that the Lord's Supper "is the true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine" (Small Catechism). We are concerned about the spiritual welfare of all who commune at the Lord's Table. ***If you are a guest and desire to commune, please speak to the pastor before the service.*** Our altar is open to those who confess oneness with us in doctrine, are active members of sister churches of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and are not under church discipline in another congregation. In Christ, Pastor Lawson

JUNE 15, 2025 † 11:00 A. M.

† In the Name of Jesus †

Prayer before Worship: Lord God, heavenly Father, We poor sinners confess that in our flesh dwells no good thing, and that, left to ourselves, we die and perish in sin, since that which is born of the flesh is flesh and cannot see the kingdom of God. But we pray that You would grant us Your grace and mercy, and for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, send Your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that being regenerate we may firmly believe the forgiveness of sins according to Your promise in baptism, and that we may daily increase in Christian love and in other good works, until we at last obtain eternal salvation; through the same Your beloved Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The Divine Service: Rite Two  
Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary: p. 60

The Office of Preparation  
(Confession & Holy Absolution)

*Please Note: When the Prelude Music begins it is a laudable custom to keep talking to a minimum and prepare for God's Service with prayer.*

*It is a laudable custom to bow the head when the holy Name of Jesus is mentioned and at other places marked with a diamond (◆)*

*It is a laudable custom to cross oneself in remembrance of baptism at those places marked by a †.*

Hymn of Invocation: 15, *Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty*

**C: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!  
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;  
Holy holy, holy, merciful and mighty!  
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!**

**Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,  
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;  
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,  
Which wert and art and evermore shalt be.**

**Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,  
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see,  
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,**

**Perfect in power, in love, and purity.**

**Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea.  
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!  
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!**

The Invocation: p. 60-61

**P:** In the Name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.



**C: A - - men.**

The Confession of Sin (form I): pp. 60-62

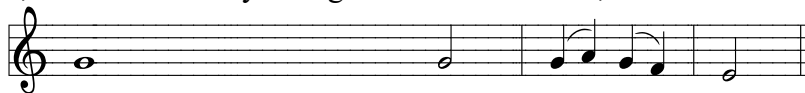
**P:** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God, our Father, beseech Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**P:** Our help is in the name of the Lord.



**C: Who made heav'n and earth.**

**P:** I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord;



**C: And You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

**P:** Let us bow before the Lord and confess our sins.

**C: O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess to You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them, and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

**P:** I ask each of you, in the presence of God who searches the heart: Do you confess that you have sinned, and do you repent of your sins?

**C: I do.**

**P:** Do you believe that Jesus Christ has redeemed you from all your sins, and do you desire forgiveness in His name?

**C: I do.**

**P:** Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you, and in the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

May He comfort your heart by His holy Absolution,  
and strengthen you by His Sacraments,  
that your joy may be full.

Peace be with you!

**C: Amen.**

## The Liturgy of the Word

### Introit



Antiphon **P:** Blessed be the Holy Trinity and the undivided Unity:/ Let us give glory to Him, for He has shown mercy unto to us.

Psalm **C:** O LORD, our *Lord*: / How excellent is Your name in all the earth!

You have set Your glory:/ Above the heavens!

Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants:/ You have ordained strength.

What is man that You are mindful of him:/ And the son of man that You visit him?

For You have made him a little lower than the angels:/ And You have crowned him with glory and honor.

Gloria Patri **C:** ♦Glory be to the Father and to the Son:/ and to the Holy Ghost.

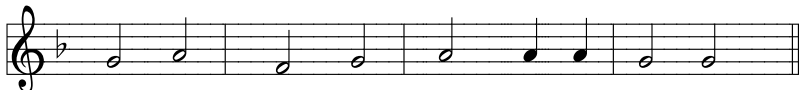
As it was in the beginning, is now:/ and ever shall be, forever more. Amen.

Antiphon **C:** Blessed be the Holy Trinity and the undivided Unity:/ Let us give glory to Him, for He has shown mercy unto to us.

The Kyrie Eleison (form I): p. 63

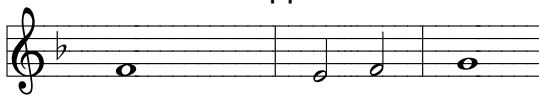


**C:** Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ have mer - cy up -



on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

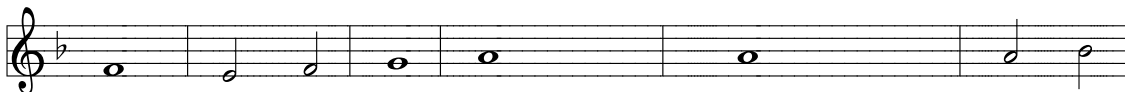
Gloria in Excelsis: pp. 64-66



**P:** Glory be to God on high:



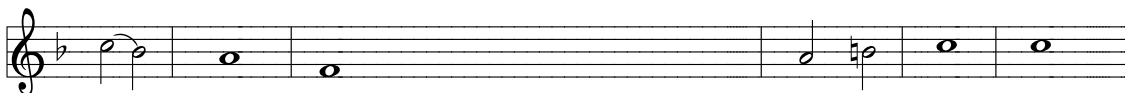
**C:** And on earth peace, good will toward men. We praise You, we bless



You, we ♦wor - ship You, we glorify You, we ♦give thanks to You, for



Your great glory. O Lord God, heav'n - ly King. God the Fa - ther



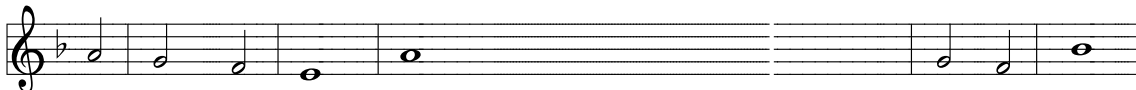
Al - mighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, ♦Je - sus Christ; O Lord



God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, You take away the sin of the



world, have mercy up - on us. You take away the sin of the world,



◆re - ceive our prayer. You are seated at the right hand of God the Father,



have mercy up - on us. For You only are holy; You on - ly are the



Lord. You only, ◆O Christ, with the Ho - ly Spirit, †are most high in the



glory of God the Father. A - men.

The Salutation: p. 66

P: The Lord be with you.



C: And with your spir - it.

## The Collect for the Day

**P:** Almighty God, by Your grace alone we are called into Your kingdom, to confess the true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the divine majesty to worship the true Unity: We beseech You, that You would keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities; for You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, live and reign, one true God, now and forever.



**C:** A - men.

## Old Testament: *Isaiah 6:1-7*

**P:** *In those days Isaiah said:* In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!" And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts." Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth with it, and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged."

**P:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C:** **Thanks be to God.**

## Gradual



**C:** Blessed are You, O Lord, who `beholds the deep:/ And who dwells between `the cherubim.

Blessed are You, O Lord, in the firma`ment of heaven:/ And greatly to be `praised forever.

Epistle: *Romans 11:33-36*

**P:** *Brethren:* Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?" "Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?" For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

**P:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C:** **Thanks be to God.**

**PLEASE STAND**

Alleluia Verse

**P:** Alleluia! Alleluia! Blessed are You, O Lord God of our Fathers: And greatly to be praised and glorified forever. Alleluia!



**C:** Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia!

Holy Gospel: *St. John 3:1-17*

**P:** The Holy Gospel according to † St. John, the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter:



**C:** Glo - ry be to You, O Lord.

**P:** *At that time* there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these

things be?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? "Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. "If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, "that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

**P:** This is the † Holy Gospel.



**C: Praise be to You, O Christ.**

Athanasian Creed: p. 29 (recited responsively)

<sup>1</sup> **P:** Whoever will be saved shall, above all else, hold the catholic faith.

<sup>2</sup> **C: Which faith, except it be kept whole and undefiled, without doubt, one will perish eternally.**

<sup>3</sup> And the true Christian faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity,

<sup>4</sup> **Neither confusing the Persons, nor dividing the substance.**

<sup>5</sup> For there is One Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>6</sup> **But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one; the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.**

<sup>7</sup> Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit.

<sup>8</sup> **The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, the Holy Spirit, uncreated.**

<sup>9</sup> The Father infinite, the Son infinite, and the Holy Spirit infinite.

<sup>10</sup> **The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal.**

<sup>11</sup> And yet there are not three eternal, but one eternal;

<sup>12</sup> **Just as there are not three uncreated, nor three infinities, but one uncreated and one infinite;**

<sup>13</sup> Likewise the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty, and the Holy Spirit is almighty.

<sup>14</sup> **And yet there are not three almighties, but one almighty.**

<sup>15</sup> So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God.

<sup>16</sup> **And yet there are not three gods, but one God.**

<sup>17</sup> Likewise the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Spirit is Lord.

<sup>18</sup> **And yet there are not three lords, but one Lord.**

<sup>19</sup> For as we are compelled by the Christian truth to acknowledge every Person by Himself to be both God and Lord, So we are forbidden by the true Christian faith to say that there are three gods or three lords.

<sup>20</sup> **The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten.**

<sup>21</sup> The Son is of the Father alone, not made nor created but begotten.

<sup>22</sup> **The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son, neither made nor created nor begotten but proceeding.**

<sup>23</sup> So there is one Father, not three fathers; one Son, not three sons, one Holy Spirit, not three holy spirits.

<sup>24</sup> **And in this Trinity none is before or after another; none is greater or less than another;**

<sup>25</sup> But all three Persons are coeternal together and coequal, so that in all things, as said before, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshiped.

<sup>26</sup> **Whoever will be saved is compelled thus to think of the Holy Trinity.**

<sup>27</sup> Furthermore it is necessary for everlasting salvation that one also believe faithfully the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>28</sup> **For the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man;**

<sup>29</sup> God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; And Man of the substance of His mother, born in the world;

<sup>30</sup> **Perfect God and perfect Man, of a rational soul and human flesh subsisting.**

<sup>31</sup> Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead and inferior to the Father as touching His manhood.

<sup>32</sup> **Who, although He is God and Man, yet He is not two but one Christ;**

<sup>33</sup> One, not by changing of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking the manhood into God;

<sup>34</sup> **One indeed, not by confusion of substance, but by oneness of person.**

<sup>35</sup> For just as the rational soul and flesh is one man, So God and Man is one Christ;

<sup>36</sup> **Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead.**

<sup>37</sup> He ascended into heaven, He is seated at the right hand of the Father, God almighty, from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

<sup>38</sup> **At whose coming all will rise again with their bodies and will give an account of their own works.**

<sup>39</sup> And they that have done good will enter into life everlasting; and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.

<sup>40</sup> **This is the catholic faith; whoever does not faithfully and firmly believe this cannot be saved.**

Chief Hymn: *405, The Mystery Hidden from the Eyes*

**P:** The mystery hidden from the eyes Of learned men and sages,  
God hath revealed us from the skies, In Scriptures holy pages,  
That He alone is King above All other gods whatever,  
Great, mighty, faithful, full of love, His people's shield and Savior;  
One Essence but three Persons.

As Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, The righteous seed adore Him;  
So named, so praised, He is the boast of all who bow before Him  
He's Abraham's and Isaac's God, and Jacob's whom He knoweth,  
The Lord of hosts, who every good, Both night and day, bestoweth;  
Who only worketh wonders.

**C:** **The Father hath the Son begot, First-born of every creature;  
The Son took our weak flesh, but not our sinfulness of nature;  
Both from the Father and the Son The Holy Ghost proceedeth  
From all eternity, yet none In might and pow'r exceedeth;  
All equal, co-eternal.**

**Be glad, my heart, thy Portion see, Thy priceless Pearl and Treasure!  
He is thy Friend, supply will He Thy needs with bounteous measure;  
He made thee in His image blest, Was for thy pardon smitten,  
With true faith fills thee, through His grace Doth all thy crosses sweeten  
With His dear Word of promise.**

**Rise, then, to Him, the Ever-blest, And learn to know Him rightly;  
Such knowledge can alone bring rest, And make thy soul burn brightly  
With the pure flame of holy love, Which cheers thy course to heaven;  
For God will show thee things above, Which here 'tis only given  
To hear of, and see darkly.**

**O Prince of Might! Thy mercy show Thou God of earth and heaven;  
To every sinner here below Thy saving grace be given!  
Bring back Thy sheep that go astray, And sinful eyes enlighten,  
And turn Thou everything away That wickedly might frighten  
Thine own, whose faith is feeble.**

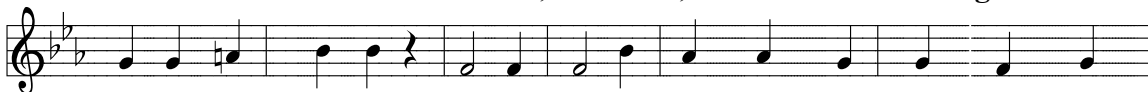
**Grant this, that we, Thy people, may All reach the heavenly portals,  
And in Thy kingdom sing for aye 'Mid all the blest immortals:  
That Thou, O Lord, art King alone, Above all gods whatever,  
The Father, Son, and Spirit, One, Thy people's Shield and Savior  
One Essence, but three Persons!**

Sermon: Christ is in our midst. **He is and ever shall be.**

Offertory: pp. 70-71



**C: Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right**



**spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from Your pres - ence, and**



**take not Your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of**



**Your sal - va - tion; and up - hold me with Your free spir - it. A - men.**

The Intercessions: *each petition concludes:* Lord, in Your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Hymn of Preparation: *ELH 403, God Loved the World So that He Gave*

**C: God loved the world so that He gave His only Son the lost to save  
That all who would in Him believe Should everlasting life receive.**

**Christ Jesus is the Ground of faith, Who was made flesh and suffered death;  
All that confide in Him alone Are built on this chief Cornerstone.**

**God would not have the sinner die, His Son with saving grace is nigh;  
His Spirit in the Word doth teach How man the blessed goal may reach.**

**Be of good cheer, for God's own Son Forgives all sins which thou hast done;  
And, justified by Jesus' blood, Thy Baptism grants the highest good.**

**If thou be sick, if death draw near, This truth thy troubled heart can cheer:  
Christ Jesus saves my soul from death; That is the firmest ground of faith.**

*PLEASE STAND*

**Glory to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Three in One!  
To Thee, O blessed Trinity, Be praise now and eternally!**

## The Liturgy of the Holy Communion

The Preface, Proper Preface & Sanctus: pp. 72-76

**P:** The Lord be with you.



**C:** And with your spir - it.

**P:** Lift up your hearts.



**C:** We lift them up un - to the Lord.

**P:** Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

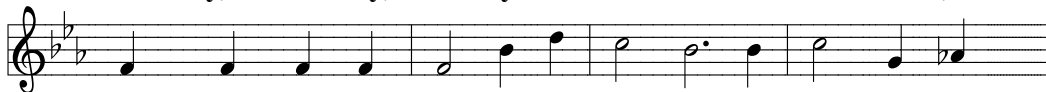


**C:** It is good and right so to do.

**P:** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God; who with Your only-begotten Son and the Holy Spirit are one God, one Lord. In the confession of the only true God we worship the Trinity in person and the Unity in substance, of majesty co-equal. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:



**C:** Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;



Heav'n 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,



Bless - ed is He, Bless - ed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.



Ho - san - na, Ho - san - na, Ho - san - na in the high - est.

The Lord's Prayer: pp. 77-78

**P:** Our Father ... †but deliver us from evil;



**C:** For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the



glo - ry for - ev - er and ev - er. A - men.



## The Distribution of the Holy Communion to the Faithful

Prayers for “**Before Holy Communion**” and  
for “**After Holy Communion**” are found on page 40 in ELH.

*The Pastor distributes the sacred host with the words “This is the true Body of Christ, given for you.” It is a laudable custom for communicants to respond “Amen” before receiving the host on the tongue. The Pastor distributes the sacred blood of Christ with the words “This is the true Blood of Christ, shed for you.” It is a laudable custom for communicants to respond “Amen” before receiving the Blood of Christ.*

*After all have communed, whatever remains of Christ’s Body & Blood is consumed and the Pastor reverently cleanses the sacred vessels.*

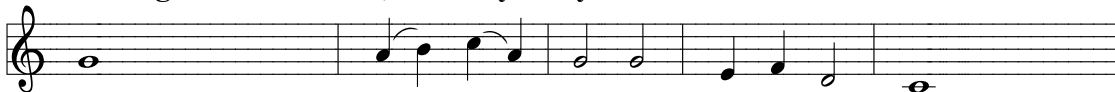
Nunc Dimittis: pp. 81-82



**C: Lord, now you let Your servant de - part in peace ac -**



**cord-ing to Your word, For my eyes have seen Your Salvation:**



**which You have pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,**



**a Light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the Glo - ry of Your**



**peo - ple Is - ra - el. ♦ Glo - ry be to the Father and**



**to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; As it was in the beginning,**



is now, and ev - er shall be, for - ev - er - more. A - men.

The Collect of Thanksgiving: pp. 82-83

P: O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good.



C: And His mercy en - dures for - ev - er.

P: O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in lovingkindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever.



C: A - men.

The Salutation: p. 84

P: The Lord be with you.



C: And with your spir - it.

The Benedicamus: p. 84

P: Let us bless the Lord.



C: Thanks be to God.

The Benediction: p. 84

**P:** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and † give you peace.



**C:** A - men, a - men, a - men.

Dismissal Hymn: 404, *The Lord, My God, Be Praised*

**C:** The Lord, my God, be praised, My Light, my life from heaven;  
My Maker, who to me Hath soul and body given;  
My Father, who doth shield And keep me day by day,  
Doth make each moment yield Now blessings on my way.

The Lord, my God, be praised, My Trust, my life from heaven,  
The Father's own dear Son, Whose life for me was given;  
Who for my sin atoned With His most precious blood,  
Who giveth me by faith The highest heavenly good.

The Lord, my God, be praised, My Hope, my Life from heaven,  
The Spirit, whom the Son In love to me hath given.  
'Tis He revives my heart, 'Tis He that gives me power,  
Help, comfort, and support In sorrow's gloomy hour.

The Lord, my God, be praised, My God, who ever liveth,  
To whom the heavenly host All praise and honor giveth.  
The Lord, my God, be praised, In whose great name I boast,  
God Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

To Him with joyful song Our praises we are bringing  
And with the angel throng Thrice "Holy" we are singing.  
With one united voice The Church doth Him adore.  
The Lord, my God, be praised Now and forevermore. Amen.

*It is a laudable custom to offer SILENT PRAYER  
at the end of the Divine Service. See p. 40 in the front  
of the hymnal.*

# Our Life Together

**THE PASTOR IS AVAILABLE** for private Confession & Absolution, and for confidential pastoral counselling, or just to chat. Please feel free to stop in. (The Augsburg Confession teaches that “[private] Confession is not abolished among us. ... Our people are taught that they should highly prize the Absolution as being God’s voice and pronounced by God’s command. ... They are reminded what great consolation it brings to anxious consciences. ... They are taught that faith in Christ truly obtains and receives the forgiveness of sins.” Article 25)

**The Bible Study & Sunday School** meet together for the opener at 12:30 in the parish hall. Today’s (abbreviated) study will begin a look at the immediate post-Flood world, culminating in the idolatry of the Tower of Babel and the division of the human race.  
*No Thursday Study this week.*

**Childrens’ Bulletin:** Please be sure to take a copy of the childrens’ bulletin home with you, to review with your kids or grandkids the Sunday gospel (or a related gospel) during the week.

## **Cleaning at Bethany**

June 16-28

Bulls

**The 108<sup>th</sup> Annual ELS Convention** begins today in Mankato, MN with the Synod Sunday service at 4pm. The convention itself opens tomorrow morning. Devotions, services and convention proceedings will be streamed live at [www.els.org/convention](http://www.els.org/convention) A schedule is available on the same page. The theme for this year’s convention is: *The Bondage of the Will: I Believe that I Cannot by My Own Reason or Strength...* Pastor will be leaving for convention later this afternoon and will return Friday evening. Please keep the Officers, pastors, and delegates of the ELS in your prayers as they spend the week doing the synod’s business.

**New Treasurers Report:** Please take a copy of the new treasurers report off the table in the entryway and keep up on the congregation’s finances. If you are able, please prayerfully consider your gifts to the ongoing work of Bethany Lutheran Church here in The Dalles. Thank you for *all* you have generously given in the past! We are truly blessed to have a place to gather to hear the precious Gospel of the crucified and risen Christ and to be given the benefits of all that He has done on our behalf.

**Semi-annual Voters Meeting:** It is time to set a date for the semi-annual voters meeting for a Sunday in July or early August. We want to pick a date when the majority of the voters will be in attendance. *If you are an officer, it is necessary for you to be at the meeting!* Please speak with Pastor or Nathan Larson about any dates you WILL NOT be able to attend. We will set a tentative date in the next couple of weeks.

**Congregation at Prayer Sheet:** Please update Pastor on the status of any of your friends and loved ones who are included in the petitions on our weekly prayer sheet so that he can edit accordingly.

**Pastor's Vacation:** Pastor Bryant will be here to preach and celebrate the Divine Service on July 6. Pastor and Kristen will be vacationing with family in Montana. That Sunday is our First Sunday Fellowship. So please bring refreshments to share and stay around for Christian fellowship. There will be no Bible Class or Sunday School that day.

**The Word of the Lord Endures Forever** is a daily 15-minute verse by verse Bible Study on demand hosted by confessional Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Pastor Will Weedon. Currently Pastor Weedon is going through Genesis 24-39. Go to [thewordendures.org/search-by-book/](http://thewordendures.org/search-by-book/) to see the extensive list of books that have already been covered.

### **Feasts, Commemorations, and Events**

**Monday – Friday:** Pastor at Synod Convention & Apologetics Conference in MN

**Thursday:** No Bible Study

**Next Sunday:** CELEBRATION OF THE 495TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
AUGSBURG CONFESSION

Concordia Service of the Word, 9:00am

Bethany Holy Communion, 11:00am;

Bethany Sunday School & Bible Study, 12:30pm

Youth Catechesis at Bethany, 1:45pm

## Are You a Catholic?

Today is Trinity Sunday. As is customary in American Lutheranism on this day, we are reciting the Athanasian Creed. This Creed isn't very familiar (because we only use it once a year). It's long and detailed (which is probably why it's only used once a year). But still, it is one of the three Universal Creeds of the Christian Church (the other two are the Apostles' and Nicene).

The Athanasian Creed also begins and concludes with uncomfortable language for Lutherans: *Whoever will be saved shall, above all else, hold the catholic faith. ... This is the catholic faith; whoever does not faithfully and firmly believe this cannot be saved.* The **Catholic** faith? We're not Roman Catholics, we're Lutherans! (or we're *Protestants*, or we're just plain old *Christians*)

Too many Lutherans associate the word *Catholic* only with the Church of Rome and so, reject using it for the Lutheran Church and for themselves. Yet, the word *Catholic* simply means "Universal." It refers to the whole Church of Christ on earth. The Roman Church has co-opted the term for itself and far too many Lutherans and other Christians are happy to let the Pope have it. Some think that the word is unimportant and should just be dropped from the Church's vocabulary. But the term *Catholic* has a great deal of meaning which is too often ignored or forgotten when the term isn't used.

### The Whole Church

If you think of yourself as a Catholic, then you will realize that you belong to the whole Church of Christ on earth, and not to a sect that stands apart from the whole Church of Christ on earth. Throughout history, the word *Catholic* has referred to the one, holy, universal, apostolic Church of Christ that covers every corner of the globe, wherever the Gospel is preached and the Sacraments are administered. If we reject the term *Catholic* for ourselves, then, think of what that implies. We are excluding other Christians from "our Church" and/or we are excluding ourselves from the one, holy, universal, apostolic Church of Christ on earth.

### Catholic Doctrine

If you think of yourself as a Catholic, you will better appreciate the teachings of the one, holy Church, and of the Lutheran Church specifically. Catholic doctrine is that pure doctrine which has been taught in the Church from the days of her very founding. The Lutheran Confessions repeatedly insist that in our doctrine "there is nothing that departs from the Scriptures or the catholic church" and that "we have taken most diligent care that no new doctrine should creep into our churches." That's

because a new doctrine would be neither a scriptural nor a universal, i.e., *Catholic* doctrine. The errors of the Roman Church actually contradict the Catholic doctrine.

### **The Augsburg Confession: A Catholic Confession**

Next Sunday we will celebrate the 495<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Presentation of the Augsburg Confession. On June 25, 1530 German Princes and other laymen stood before the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V and made their confession of the *Catholic* faith in the face of the Papal Church, which had corrupted that faith. In the conclusion of the Augsburg Confession, they insisted that “in doctrine and ceremonies we have received nothing contrary to Scripture or the Church universal [i.e., the *Catholic Church*]. It is clear that we have been very careful to make sure no new ungodly doctrine creeps into our churches.” The Augsburg Confession as the chief confession of the Lutheran Church is nothing less than the Catholic Confession. To be Lutheran is to be both *Evangelical* and *Catholic*.

### **Catholic Baptism**

If you think of yourself as a Catholic, you will remember that there is one Baptism (Eph. 4:5-6). You were not baptized into the Lutheran Church or a denomination. You were baptized into the one, holy, catholic (“universal”) and apostolic Church of Christ. Everyone who has received this Sacrament was baptized into the same Catholic Church.

### **Catholic Lord’s Supper**

If you think of yourself as a Catholic, you will better appreciate the Sacrament of Christ’s Body and Blood. You will remember the saints and martyrs of old who received this holy Sacrament, not monthly or less but rather weekly and even daily. And you will be sure to appreciate the truly Catholic teaching that the consecrated bread IS the very Body of Christ and the consecrated wine IS the very Blood of Christ.

### **Catholic History**

If you think of yourself as a Catholic, you will remember that you belong to the same Church and the same Family of God as the great saints and martyrs of the ancient Church. You belong to the same Church as did the twelve Apostles and St. Clement of Rome in the first century, St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Polycarp of Smyrna and St. Irenaeus of Lyons in the second century, the European St. Cyprian of the third century, the African St. Augustine of the fourth century, and the whole army of

those great fathers who dedicated their lives to preserving the Catholic Faith whole and undefiled. Dr. Martin Luther too belongs to that great army. You do not belong to a Church that started in the sixteenth century. You belong to a Church begun by Christ on Pentecost, and which has continued for two thousand years with unbroken tradition.

### **Catholic Fellowship**

You belong to the Church which can never exclude from fellowship and congregational life anyone simply because he speaks with a different accent or has a lighter or darker skin coloring. Your Church has existed not only in the United States, Germany, and Scandinavia, but has been found (and is found) also in Asia, Africa, South America, and indeed in all the world.

### **Are You a Catholic?**

Yes, you are a Catholic, and it's important for you to think of yourself as a Catholic. There is no reason to cede that term (and its meaning) to the Church of Rome. If we don't think of ourselves as Catholics, our vision of the Church soon narrows to one particular denomination, to one very limited period of time, and to one locality. We will tend to forget the magnificent heritage and the world-wide scope that Christ has bestowed on his holy Church. If we think of ourselves as Catholics, we will be able to say the Athanasian Creed with sincerity, understanding and conviction: *Whoever will be saved shall, above all else, hold the **catholic** faith.* By God's grace we belong to the Catholic Church – the Church of all times, of all peoples, of all places. Thank God for it!



**Today's Chief Hymn** *The Mystery Hidden from the Eyes* (ELH 405) is Paul Gerhardt's magisterial hymn on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. Gerhardt (1607-1676) is recognized as the greatest hymn writer of the Lutheran Church next to Martin Luther. Based on Scripture, stanzas 1-3 set forth Who God is in Himself and how each Person of the Trinity relates to the other. Verse 4 describes, simply, each Person's work for our salvation. Verses 5-7 pray that the Triune God would continue His work for us, that we would recognize His work, and give all glory to His Holy Name. The tune this text is set to in our hymnal is Martin Luther's very first, composed in 1523 in the style of a 16<sup>th</sup> Century folk ballad.

**Trinity Sunday:** God the Father sent His Son because He loves life. God the Son paid the price necessary to redeem life. God the Holy Spirit calls people to faith, giving them new life now and eternally (John 3:1-17). The Holy Trinity is For Life!

**Prayer:** *Holy Father, Son, and Spirit, make my life reflect Your own and extend it especially to those in the shadow of death. Amen.*

***Life Thoughts in the Church Year/One Year Lectionary • [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org)***