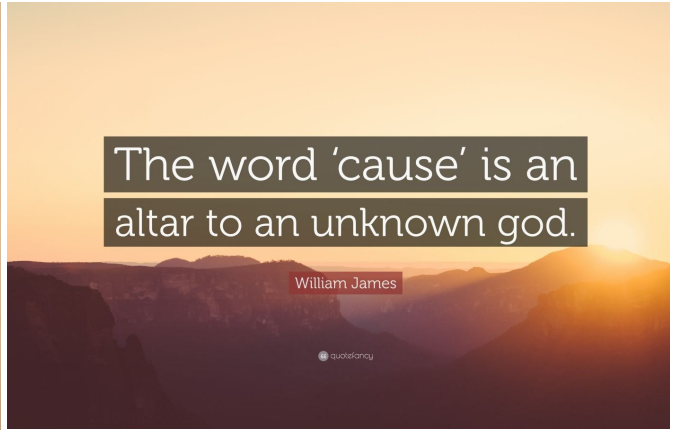




Altar of the "unknown god"
from the Palatine Hill Archaeological Museum in Rome.



BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Paul's Sermon at Athens
6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

MAY 10TH, 2026
8:30 AM & 10:30 AM

✠ GATHERING ✠

+ indicates to stand in body or spirit; **bold print** indicates congregational responses

PRELUDE (8:30) "Gigue on 'I Know that My Redeemer Lives'" arr. Mark Albrecht
(10:30) "The Day of Resurrection" arr. Anne Krentz Organ

WORDS OF WELCOME

Alleluia! Christ is risen! **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
by whose hand we are given new birth,
by whose speaking we are given new life. **Amen.**

+ THANKSGIVING FOR THE WATERS OF BAPTISM

We bless you, almighty God, for the gift of water—
for the oceans that surround the earth, for the rivers that nurture the land,
for the lakes and rivers that you provide for our community—
We bless you, O God, for the waters of the earth.

We honor you, merciful God, for showering us with water—
for the rain that nourishes the plants and trees, for the floods that restore the fields,
for the dew that freshens dry places—

We honor you, O God, for the waters you send.

We glorify you, gracious God, for the waters of baptism—
for the water of the Jordan that washed our Lord Jesus,
for the waters that baptized the believers on Pentecost,
for the water that illumines us with your Word,
for the water that pours out the gifts of the Spirit,
for the water that bathes the church universal—
the Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Protestants, Pentecostals, Evangelicals, independents—

We glorify you, O God, for the waters of baptism.

We worship you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
almighty, merciful, and gracious.

Well of forgiveness, you revive us,

Cup of cold water, you refresh us,

Pool of rebirth, you renew us.

To you comes the worship of all your people, now and forever.

Amen!

+ **GATHERING HYMN** *“Come, All You People”* ELW #819

+ **APOSTOLIC GREETING**

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

+ **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**God of the unknown, your mysteries are astounding. Give us knowledge where you see fit,
and open our hearts and minds when we hear something new, that we might find you in
places previously unknown and misunderstood. Amen.**

*(10:30) At this time, children age 3 to grade 5 are invited to go to Sunday School.
They will return to the sanctuary before communion.*

✠ **WORD** ✠

+ **SCRIPTURE ACCLAMATION** *“Wonderful Grace of Jesus”* VT #170 *at back of bulletin*

+ **HOLY GOSPEL** *JOHN 1:16-18*

The gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

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

READING *ACTS 17:16-31*

A reading from Acts.

¹⁶While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons and also in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸Also some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers debated with him. Some said, "What does this pretentious babbler want to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign divinities." (This was because he was telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.) ¹⁹So they took him and brought him to the Areopagus and asked him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?" ²⁰It sounds rather strange to us, so we would like to know what it means." ²¹Now all the Athenians and the foreigners living there would spend their time in nothing but telling or hearing something new.

²²Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely spiritual you are in every way. ²³For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶From one ancestor he made all peoples to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷so that they would search for God and perhaps fumble about for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said,

'For we, too, are his offspring.'

²⁹"Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

HOMILY

+ **HYMN OF THE DAY** *"Lord, Speak to Us, That We May Speak"* ELW #676

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

+ SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING



Guests

Generosity is part of who we are as God's people. Guests can use their QR code to give via Breeze, Bethel's trusted online giving platform. Select "Member Faith Giving" to give to the general budget. Members can use their QR code to sign into Breeze to give a one-time gift or to schedule an automated donation. Online giving cards (at the name tag stations), checks, or cash may be placed in the offering plates as they are passed.



Members

ANTHEM (8:30) *"Whoever Would Be Great Among You"* Ronald A. Nelson
(10:30) *"Gigue on 'I Know that My Redeemer Lives'"* arr. Mark Albrecht

+ OFFERTORY



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 dreams of



all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble

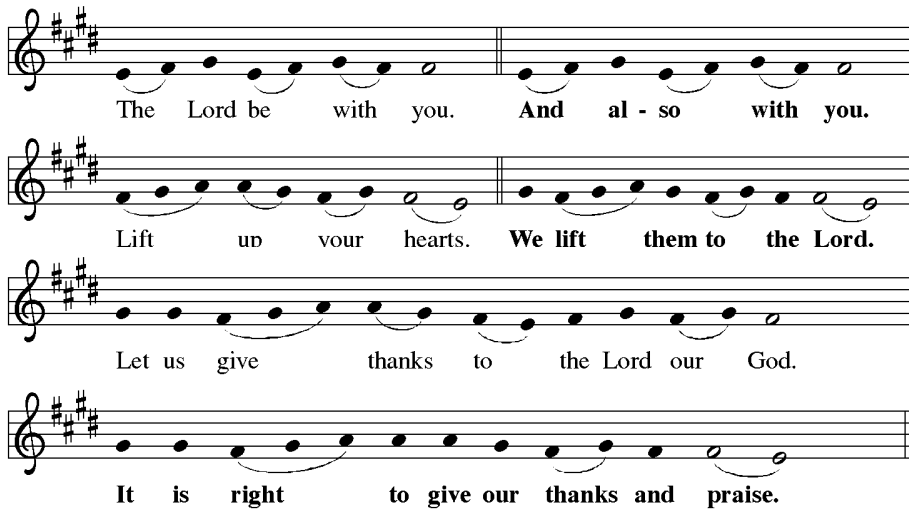


with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

+ OFFERTORY PRAYER

✠ MEAL ✠

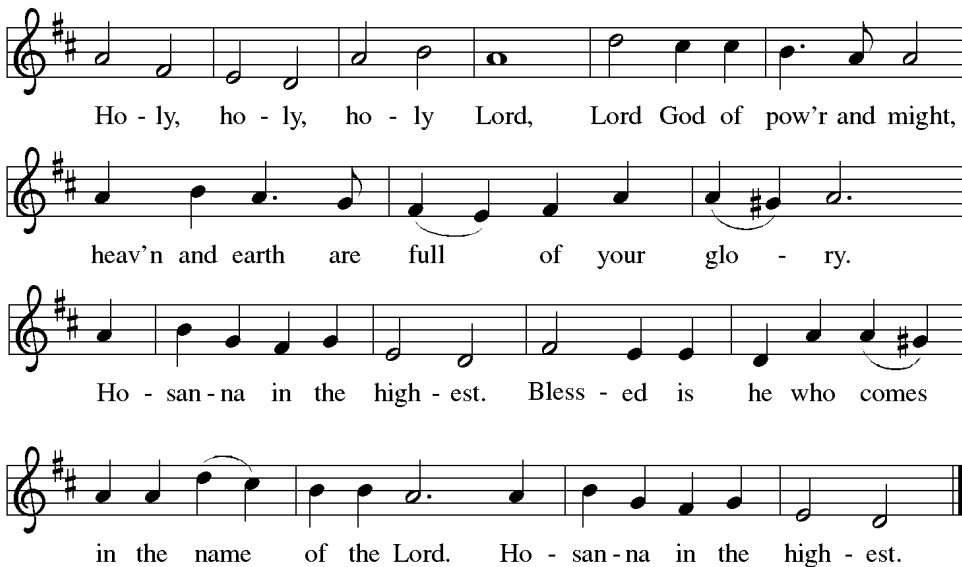
+ GREAT THANKSGIVING



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.

+ EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, who enthroned forever at your right hand intercedes for us as our great high priest. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
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.

Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age. Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth. Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood. Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea. Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey. Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one. Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ. Praise to you for your spirit poured out on all nations.

The Words of Institution / Las Palabras de la Institución

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's Passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moons and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever. **Amen.**

+ THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Mother, who is in heaven and within us,
we call upon your names.
Your wisdom come.
Your will be done,
in all the spaces in which you dwell.

Give us each day sustenance and perseverance.
Remind us of our limits
as we give grace
to the limits of others.

Separate us from the temptation of empire,
and deliver us into community.
For you are the dwelling place within us,
the empowerment around us,
and the celebration among us,
now and forever. Amen.

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.

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, grant us peace.

HOLY COMMUNION HYMN “*Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song*” ELW #808

+ TABLE BLESSING

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

✠ SENDING ✠

A BLESSING ON MOTHER’S DAY

To those who have given birth: **we celebrate with you.**

To those who have lost a child: **we mourn with you.**

To those who are pregnant with new life, both expected and surprising: **we anticipate with you.**

To those who walk the hard path of infertility,

fraught with pokes, prods, tears, and disappointment: **we walk with you.**

Forgive us when we say foolish things.

We don’t mean to make this harder than it is.

To those who experienced loss through miscarriage, abortion, failed adoption, or running away:

we grieve with you.

To those who placed children up for adoption: **we honor your selflessness**

and remember how you hold that child in your heart.

To those who are single and long to be married and mothering your own children:

we mourn that life has not turned out the way you longed for it to be.

To those who step-parent: **we walk with you on these complex paths.**

To those who are foster moms, mentor moms, and spiritual moms: **we need you.**

To those who do not wish to be a mother, do not fit into societal norms,

and gift families and communities in other ways: **we appreciate you.**

To those who envisioned lavishing love on grandchildren, yet that dream is not to be:

we grieve with you.

To those who are in the trenches with little ones every day and wear the badge of a food stain:
we see you.

To those who have lived through driving tests, medical tests, SAT's and after school activities,
and the overall testing of motherhood: **we are the better for having you in our midst.**

To those who will have emptier nests in the upcoming year: **we grieve and rejoice with you.**

To those who have disappointment, heart ache, and distance with your children: **we sit with you.**

To those who have warm and close relationships with your children: **we celebrate with you.**

To those who can go to their mothers for comfort, support, and to share joy: **we rejoice for you.**

To those who experience abuse or neglect from your mother: **we acknowledge your hurt.**

To those who lost their mothers in mind, body, or spirit: **we mourn with you.**

Whatever Mother's Day means to you this year, may you know
you are loved. You are seen. You are worthy.

And you are infinitely dear to our big, wild, beautiful God,
who is the very best example of a parent that we know. **Amen.**

+ SENDING HYMN "Founded on Faith" ACS #1048



1. Found - ed on faith, the church, a - live by grace,____
2. Your cross, O Christ, re - news our life each day.____
3. E - quipped by prayer, we live the Spir - it's call.____
4. Grow - ing in grace for God's cre - at - ed earth,____
5. Found - ed on faith, called forth, em - power'd to serve,____



— pro - claims the gos - pel here and ev - 'ry place.____
— Bap - tized in you, we learn and teach and pray.____
— Em - power'd to serve with gifts, both great and small,____
— we yearn for jus - tice, peace, and hu - man worth;____
— we share God's end - less love with - out re - serve.____



— The word of God re - sounds through time and space:____
— Fed by your love, with thank - ful hearts, we say:____
— we bring the liv - ing hope of God to all.____
— a world re - stored; a faith - ful, car - ing church.____
— Then let us shout a - loud the liv - ing Word!____



— Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

+ DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Go in peace. In Christ you are made new. Alleluia!

Alleluia! Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE “Engelberg” Robert A. Hobby

WORSHIP LEADERS

Pastor Inger Hanson & Pastor Ben Schori

Assisting Minister: (8:30) Rolf Kragseth (10:30) Marci Groenewold

Ushers: (8:30) Char Jacobsen, Dave Jacobsen, Cal Feine, Harley Foster

(10:30) Michael Sparby, Nancy Sparby

Readers: (8:30) Anton Armstrong (10:30) Gene Broughton

Sacramental Ministers: (8:30) Anton Armstrong, Clark Cary, Judy Code, Ben Fisher, Phil Ruud

(10:30) Gene Broughton

Altar Care: (set) Carol Lysne (clean) Margaret Grunzke, Carol Lysne (cups) Mary Loven

Trumpet: Gerry Hoekstra Church Choir Director: Peter Schleif

Keyboards: Megan Engel

A/V Technicians: Sam Dwyer, Asher Engle, Nathan Broughton, Nathan Hoekstra

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“Wonderful Grace of Jesus” Text & Music: Haldor Lillenas, *Northfield Hymnal No. 3*, 1918.

“Founded on Faith” Text: Paul D. Weber, © 2017 Paul D. Weber, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Tune: ENGELBERG, Charles V. Stanford, 1852-1924.

We are using ELW Setting Four for our liturgy. The Eucharistic Prayer is ELW Form IV.

The womanist version of the prayer that Jesus taught us was written by Rev. Yolanda Norton.

The Mother’s Day Blessing is adapted from Amy Young’s “The Wide Spectrum of Mothering”
(on her blog The Messy Middle: where grace and truth reside - www.messymiddle.com)

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SUNDAY ATTENDANCE

May 3	in person attendance
8:30	214
10:30	90
Total	304

NEXT SUNDAY...

The text of the day
will be **Philippians 1:1-11 [12-18a]**
with Luke 9:46-48.

+ SCRIPTURE ACCLAMATION "Wonderful Grace of Jesus" VT #170

*The first stanza is sung as a solo; all will join on second stanza before the reading of the gospel.
After the reading, the third stanza is sung.*

1 Won - der - ful grace of Je - sus, great - er than all my sin;
 2 Won - der - ful grace of Je - sus, reach - ing to all the lost,
 3 Won - der - ful grace of Je - sus, reach - ing the most de - filed,

how shall my tongue de - scribe it, where shall its praise be - gin?
 by it I have been par - doned, saved to the ut - ter - most;
 by its trans - form - ing pow - er mak - ing me God's dear child,

Tak - ing a - way my bur - den, set - ting my spir - it free,
 chains have been torn a - sun - der, giv - ing me lib - er - ty,
 pur - chas - ing peace and heav - en for all e - ter - ni - ty—

for the won - der - ful grace of Je - sus reach - es me.
 for the won - der - ful grace of Je - sus reach - es me.
 and the won - der - ful grace of Je - sus reach - es me.

Refrain

Won - der - ful the match - less grace of Je - sus,
 the match - less grace of Je - sus,

deep - er than the might - y roll - ing sea; the roll - ing sea;

won - der - ful grace, all suf - fi -
high - er than the moun - tain, spark - ling like a foun - tain, all suf - fi - cient



cient for me, for e - ven me; broad - er than the scope of my trans -
grace for e - ven me;

gres - sions, great - er far than all my sin and shame;
gres - sions, sing it! shame, my sin and shame;

O mag - ni - fy the pre - cious name of Je - sus, praise his name!

THIS WEEK—MAY 11TH—MAY 16TH
CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY—THURSDAY 9 AM - 3 PM

MONDAY

- 9:00 am Garage Sale Setup
- 12:00 pm  Bible Study @ the Vault (1520 Clinton Lane)
- 6:30 pm  Resonance Bell Choir (Adults)

TUESDAY

- 9:00 am Garage Sale Setup
- 9:45 am Staff Meeting
- 3:00 pm Lydia Circle Fellowship (The Manor Dining Room)


WEDNESDAY

- 9:00 am Garage Sale Setup
- 5:00 pm Congregational Life
- 7:00 pm Church Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY

- 9:00 am Garage Sale Setup

FRIDAY

- 7:00 am Bethel Garage Sale
- 9:15 am  WoW (Women of the Word) via zoom

SATURDAY

- 8:00 am Bethel Garage Sale



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