

Bethel Notes

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Sunday, August 27, 2023

13th Sunday after Pentecost

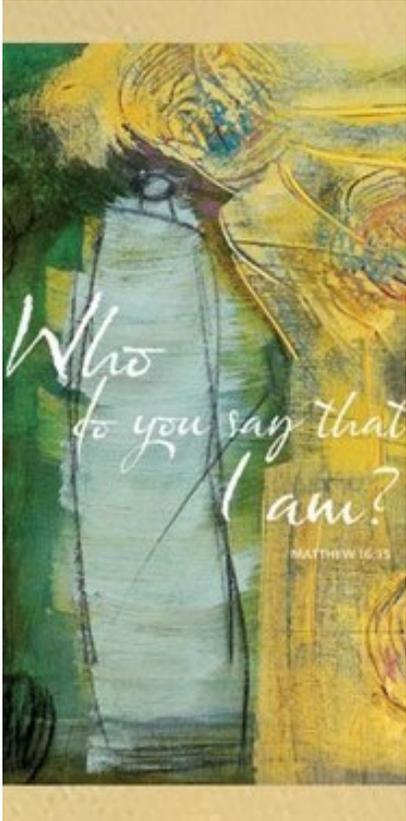
In Isaiah the people are advised to look to their spiritual ancestors as the rock from which they were hewn. Jesus declares that the church will be built on the rock of Peter's bold confession of faith. God's word of reconciliation and God's mercy are keys to the church's mission. Paul urges us to not be conformed to this world but to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, using our individual gifts to build up the body of Christ. From the table we go forth to offer our spiritual worship through word and deed.

First Reading: Isaiah 51:1-6

Psalm 138

Second Reading: Romans 12:1-8

Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20



**Join us Sunday 9:30 AM
in person or online at
bethelmt.org**

Serving This Sunday

Musicians:

Mary Seim, piano

Lay Assistant:

Sue Hesse

Usher:

Mary Gernaat

Tech:

Colter McCarty

Children's Church:

Julia Elkin

Tyler Grosenick

Counters:

Pam Dougherty

Shannon Marr

Hospitality:

Marilyn Carlson

THIS SUNDAY AT BETHEL...

We celebrate the 13th **Sunday after Pentecost.**

Thank you to **Pastor Steve Nelson** for preaching and presiding in worship.

Don't forget to check out the narthex for **God's Work, Our Hands Sunday** project sheets and hygiene kit shopping lists.

Mid-year giving statements are in the narthex for pick up, those not picked up will be mailed on Monday, August 28th. There is information in your statements giving direction on connecting to our Member Portal and Member Directory, please contact the Bethel Office with any questions.



Requesting Your Prayers

- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Tim Olson**, who is having surgery this afternoon after an accident. He will be out of work for several weeks during his recovery.
- ✝ Prayers of comfort for **Jayda Paul**, *friend of Sandy Pepos*, on the loss of her baby.
- ✝ Prayers of comfort for **Debbie Blank** as she mourns the passing of her sister, Joy.
- ✝ Prayers of support and comfort for the **People of Maui** as they continue to fight and clean up after the wildfires that took lives and destroyed property.
- ✝ Prayers of support and comfort for **Pastor Jessie and Jade** as they mourn the loss of their precious baby boy, **Kai Wilder Metzler**.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Rebecca and Anna Boucher** as Rebecca recovers from pink eye and Anna receiving medical treatment for recurrence of seizures.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Rachel Bertelson**, *daughter of Pastor Steve and Colleen Walker-Nelson*, as she recovers from a recent surgery.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Matt**, *Dena Wagner-Fossen's brother-in-law*, as he continues to monitor his health.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Cathy Rankin**, *Jeanne Rankin's sister-in-law*, as she recovers from surgery and begins treatment for stage 1 breast cancer.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Harper Spurzem**, 8 year old student at Ulm School, who has been diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Kristin**, *Bobbie Bowen's daughter*, as she manages a cancer diagnosis.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **John Korpela** as he continues with chemotherapy.
- ✝ Prayers of support for **Don and Kathi Bisgard** as they manage medical care for Don.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Dick Seim** continues to work on regaining strength.
- ✝ Prayers of support for **Caleb Pottratz** who is struggling with depression.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Lynn Klaasen**, *sister of Jan Robitaille*, receiving treatment for cancer.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Lindy Coon**, *sister of former Bethel member Laura (Wandke) Overturf*, as she continues to slowly make progress as she recovers at home from a serious injury after a fall.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Alex Bostic** as he continues to manage his health.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Linda O'Connor**, *friend of LaRae Veitch*, as she undergoes treatment for breast cancer.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Travis Cushman** as he continues treatment for cancer.
- ✝ Prayers of strength in leadership for **Gustavo Driau**, Regional Representative of South America.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Ed Pottratz** as he continues cancer treatment.

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday



September 10
2023

On Sept. 10 the ELCA will celebrate the 10th anniversary of “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday, an annual day of service in which congregations come together to lend a hand, help build a future and repair their communities. It was introduced in 2013 as a special day of service across the church to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the ELCA’s formation. Service in the community wasn’t a new concept in the ELCA, a church that is grounded in loving and serving the neighbor and in striving for justice and wholeness in the world.



Faith Lutheran Church, Lander, Wyo., 2018: Cutting wood to help families stay warm over the winter.

“God’s work. Our hands.’ Sunday is one of the ways in which we live out our purpose to invite more people to know Jesus and discover community, justice and love,” said Elizabeth Eaton, ELCA presiding bishop. “When one congregation gathers to serve its neighbors, they are one church helping in their community. But this is also the entire church. This is how we are church together responding to God’s call to love and serve.”

Recalling the initial day of service, Jon Anderson said, “We were worshiping through our service in the community, so we were a visible church.” Anderson, who is currently director of rural ministry at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, served as bishop of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod from 2003 to 2021.

“The idea that we could have a ... service day across the ELCA,” he added, “that local churches could decide what they wanted to do based on the needs of their community and the capacity of their congregation, and that they could place when they did it on the calendar to fit their needs—all of that helped it take off.” As it expanded, congregations saw the opportunity to partner with other congregations, social ministry organizations and interfaith groups in the community. Anderson said “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday has been “like yeast to help the congregational mission awareness grow.”

Yellow is the color for the day

The meaningful mission and impact that congregations experienced in 2013 made it evident that the effort would become an annual event. Bright yellow T-shirts designed especially for the day added to the enthusiasm.

“Although we do service outreach a lot in our congregation, I remember thinking that the yellow shirts were what made it seem special, really made us unified. It emphasized how many people were all in this together,” said Steven Bond, pastor of Advent Lutheran Church, Mentor, Ohio. “When we started reading reports of other churches

across the country, it just was a great feeling to know that we were part of something much larger than ourselves.”

Another meaningful outcome is how intergenerational relationships develop and deepen. “It’s a great experiment to try to put young and older people together to see what develops from that,” Anderson said. “If you sit and paint picnic tables like I did with people for about two hours, you get a sense of who people are that you’re working with.” Bond agreed: “It became one of our guiding principles, that everything we did was to focus on being intergenerational. ‘God’s work. Our hands.’ Sunday was our first intentional way of doing that.”

In Omaha, Neb., “generous giving and compassionate service has always been part of who Lord of Love is,” said its pastor, Becky Sells. “This is a day when we all look forward to gathering intergenerationally to do acts of love toward others. Sells said the congregation has discovered additional ways throughout the year “to do God’s work using our hands and resources to make a difference.” Hands from Lord of Love have planted a garden to support a local food pantry, made blankets for those in emergency situations and moved furniture to support refugee resettlement. “Our church’s name, Lord of Love, encourages us always to remember that when we share or care for others, we do so in the name of our Lord with the gifts of our hands and our hearts that God has first given to us,” Sells said.

Making connections

"It is a very special Sunday," said Samuel Nieva, pastor of Pueblo de Dios Lutheran Church in Compton, Calif. The congregation has been serving the community for 20 years, distributing food and clothing. On "God's work. Our hands." Sunday, members who work in fields such as dentistry, nursing and hairstyling offer their skills and services to the community.

"It is an effective way for people to discover our heart of service and love for God," he said, "helping them, for example, with a dental cleaning, a haircut, vital-sign checks and timely advice. The community recognizes that our congregation is a church that practices the integral mission of word, sacrament and the action of social justice ... that we are a congregation that is interested in its spiritual and material needs."

Renee Patterson, pastor of Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran in Shoreview, Minn., said the day of service has made her congregation more aware of how they can make a difference in their community. Members often suggest partnering with local organizations to increase the impact of service opportunities. "They're starting to connect what happens at Shepherd of the Hills to what happens in the rest of the world," she said. "It has become part of our DNA, part of what we do as a church. It's common language. Everybody at our church knows what 'day of service' means."

During the COVID-19 pandemic many congregations continued caring for their communities on the day of service. They organized projects for individuals and families that were virtual, outdoors, physically distanced or drive-through.

"While 2023 looks different than 2020, there are still unique challenges in our communities where we can represent God's hand in caring for people and creation," said Susan Brown, leader of ministry communication and coordination at New Life Lutheran Church in Bolingbrook, Ill. "One of those new challenges is just getting people to connect in person again. Whether that is bringing people together to serve or partnering with other community groups to work together, God's work isn't limited to only what we as one congregation can do. We joyfully anticipate where we might be led to new opportunities to serve and new people to connect with."

Through acts of service, we pursue justice and seek peace. "We live in a world of hopelessness, inequality and adversity," Nieva said. "Life is not the same for everyone, especially for those who are out of opportunities, such as the undocumented or people who have not had an encounter with Christ, who are the majority of our members. For them we give flavor and light to their lives, building with God's help an opportunity to achieve material and spiritual goals."

As "God's work. Our hands." Sunday continues to build among ELCA congregations and related ministries, so does the opportunity for members to embrace how their faith connects to their lives out in the community and the world.

"We oftentimes end up creating the church to take care of things inside the church, and that's where most of the energy of the church goes, when actually we're called to be the scattered church," Anderson said. "So the church is being the church out at work right now, and people are living their faith in serving and [as] God's work is happening through their hands.

"God loves us, God shows God's grace to us, and then we sing our lives as a hymn of praise to God. So what is 'God's work. Our hands.' Sunday? It's a day we sing our praise to God for God's grace and love."

Service Projects that Bethel is providing. Sign up sheets are in the Narthex or call the Bethel Office for more information.

At Bethel:

- ◆ On the patio, paint the benches around the tree and clean up the leaves and debris—4 to 5 people
- ◆ Assemble Hygiene kits
- ◆ Make cards for Assisted living centers here in Great Falls.

Cameron Center/Rescue Mission/Women's Shelter

- ◆ They are asking for 6-8 people for each facility.

Angel Center, services the homeless population, by providing, meals, showers, laundry service

- ◆ Prepare meal at Bethel: Spaghetti, Bread, dessert, salad; Deliver and set up - 6

Family Promise, Promise Place Shelter

- ◆ Yard clean up. Pick up debris, leaves, etc., pull a few weeds, tidy lawn—4 people

After our service projects are finished about Noon, we will meet back at Bethel for a pot luck.



Logos Youth Ministry

Wednesdays

Pre-K through 8th Grade 5:30—7:30 pm

High School 9th – 12th grade 6:30—8:30 pm

for youth in Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade.

LOGOS is the fun, mid-week youth ministry program which aims to nurture young people into faith and discipleship through Christian relationships.

- LOGOS means “The Word” and this ministry is theology (Word) in practice. LOGOS helps churches like Bethel bring the Word to youth.
- LOGOS is a unique, intergenerational program where people of all ages from our church and community actively participate.
- LOGOS consists of bible study, a shared meal, games and worship.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

LOGOS begins in September

First night September 13, 2023

Cost of program per child \$70.00/year

Scholarships available. Contact the Bethel Office for more information.



1009 18th Ave SW

406-761-1543

bethelmt.org

GOSPEL MESSAGE

August 27, 2023, 13th Sunday after Pentecost

Dare We?

There are lots of possible truthful answers to Jesus' question "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" (Matthew 16:13): prophet, teacher, storyteller, healer, wonder-worker, rabble-rouser, friend, exorcist, Nazarene, Jew, son of Joseph. We come to know one another from many angles: in experiences and relationships; by what others say; on Facebook, Twitter, the six o'clock news; at Monday coffee group, happy hour; through factory newsletters, class yearbooks. One might be, all at once, author, gardener, mother, felon, philanthropist, swimmer.



Photo by [Johannes Plenio](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Jesus begins by asking what people say about him—what's the word on the street? As expected, responses are a mixture of religious, political, and personal perspectives. Then Jesus cuts closer, exacting from his disciples their answer. "Who do *you* say that I am?" (Matt. 16:15). It might seem that he's quizzing the group with a trick question to see who answers rightly and thus gets rewarded with keys to the kingdom of heaven.

Peter's answer gains him the glory. If that episode was all Matthew's gospel recorded, we might conclude that Peter did, in fact, recognize Jesus more clearly than the others. But every one of the disciples had made that very same confession, "You are the Son of God," in the safety of a seaworthy boat with Jesus on a calmed sea (Matt. 14:33). In this sense, Peter's response was predictable.

However, Matthew bothers to write that this happened in Caesarea Philippi, also known as Paneas, site of a famous shrine to Pan, god of shepherds. Named for Caesar, the emperor, and Philip, ruler of the region, it is identified with imperial power. In the context of tremendous political and religious forces, Jesus asks, "Who do you say that I am?"

In this sense, it is a brave confession when Peter names Jesus—not Caesar—as Chosen, Lord, and presence of God. Jesus' way of blessing the world contradicts all that empire is about. On that confession the church is called to stand—today. Dare we?

From [sundaysandseasons.com](#).

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Special Events At Bethel



50th Anniversary celebration and renewal of wedding vows for Leonard and Shelly Murphy. Dave Scholten presiding.



Baptism of Charlie Wade Line, Sunday August 20th. With Sponsors Hayden and Noelle Wright, Parents Austin and Emma, Pastor Sara Branom and Sandy Pepos assisting.

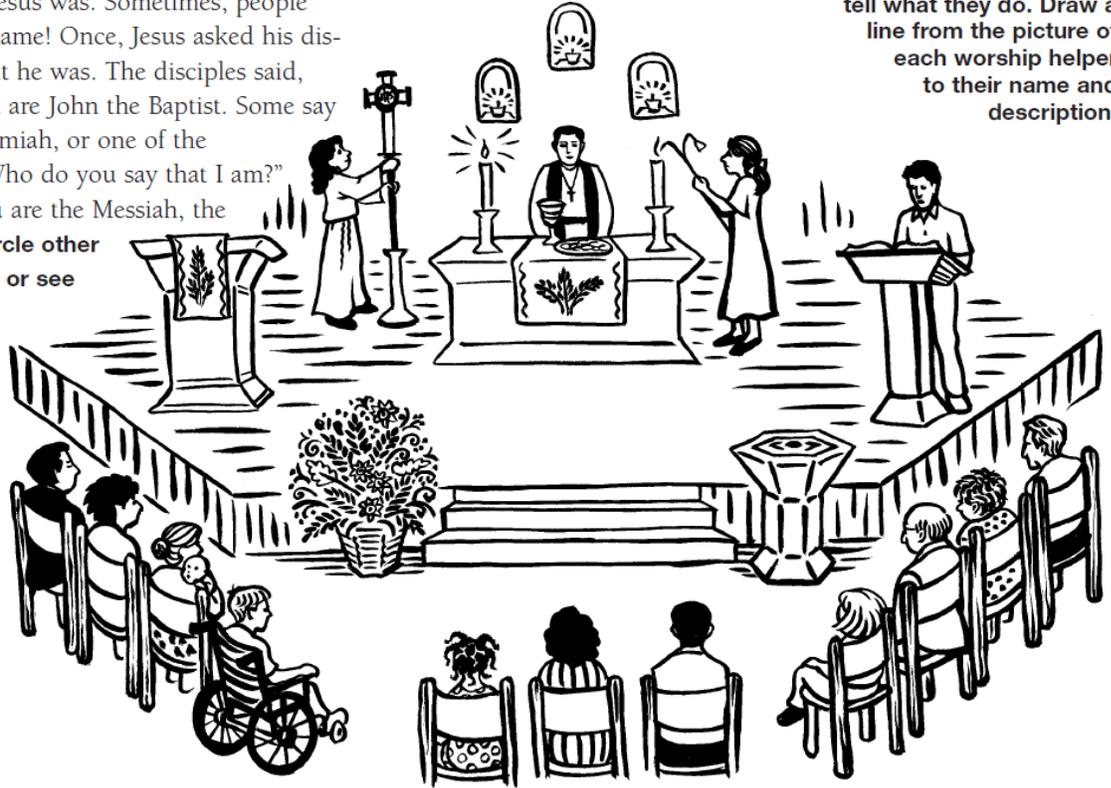
Just for *YOUTH*

What's in a name

Matthew 16:13-20

Not everyone knew who Jesus was. Sometimes, people called him by the wrong name! Once, Jesus asked his disciples who people said that he was. The disciples said, "Some people say that you are John the Baptist. Some say that you are Elijah, or Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." Jesus asked, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter answered Jesus, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." **Circle other names for Jesus you hear or see today.**

People who help with worship have names that tell what they do. Draw a line from the picture of each worship helper to their name and description.



Lord

Savior

Lamb of God

Son of God

Teacher

Messiah

This Week...

Create a week-long list of Jesus' names.

The acolyte lights candles and helps the pastor.

The crucifer brings the cross into the worship space.

The lector reads from the Bible.

Welcome to worship. A name can tell a lot about who someone is. What do you think of when you hear "Grandma," "the President," "my teacher," "pastor"? You have different relationships with different people. **Name people you think of as:**

Friend

Neighbor

Leader

Fun maker

FAMILY

Helper



Jesus, thank you for helping me in many ways. Amen.

Peter the rock

Jesus called Peter the rock because he knew Peter would be a strong leader for the church. Do you have a nickname that says something about who you are or what you can do? (the runner, the smiling one, the thinker, junior)

Write that name or choose one you think describes you. Draw a picture of how that name describes you.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monday 8/28

- Bethel Office closing at 3:00 pm.

Tuesday 8/29

- Electric City Bible Study, Zoom meeting 7:00 am
- Bethel Office will be closed between 11:00 am and 1:00 pm

Wednesday 8/30

- Bible Study on hold until further notice

Friday 9/1

- Bethel office is closed.
- Aitz Chaim Friday worship 6:00 pm.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday 9/3

- Worship led by Jim Carlson, LPA in-person and live stream 9:30 am.

Monday 9/4

- Labor Day, Bethel Office is closed.

Tuesday 9/5

- Electric City Bible Study, Zoom meeting 7:00 am

Wednesday 9/6

- Bible Study on hold until further notice

Thursday 9/7

- Exec Board meeting on Zoom 5:30 pm.

Friday 9/8

- Bethel office is closed.

Article on page 3 and 4 taken from Living Lutheran Magazine, Author Candice Hill Buchbinder.

Fellowship Ministries

Electric City Bible Study—online

What a great way to connect with one another! Join our bible study via Zoom, Tuesday mornings at 7:00 am. Contact Laurie Turner at lolli51gus@icloud.com for a link to join the meeting.

Men's Breakfast Meets in-person

Join us for a fun and engaging conversation, and insightful discussion of each week's lectionary texts as we meet in the Fellowship Hall Tuesday mornings at 7:00 am. Contact Dave Scholten at dscholten@dlsconsulting.net for more information.

Resumes September 12th 7:00 AM

Hope Circle—in person

This group meets once a month usually on Thursday evenings. Bible study and fellowship are celebrated with this group of ladies. Contact Terry Korpela to be on the group email for meetings and prayer requests terry.korpela@gmail.com.

On hold until the fall.

Weekly Text Study with Pastor Jessie—online—On Hold Until Further Notice

The 1st Monday Night Quilters

Meet at **New Hope Lutheran**
3125 5th Avenue South (use the back door entrance)

Thanks to all who are doing work at home--binding, making tops, getting backs ready to use and the final step--tying the quilts.
Questions? Call 799-0100.

Next meeting
Monday, September 11, 2023
6:00-8:00 pm

Pastor Jessie Obrecht Contact information Email: bethelgf.pastor@gmail.com Phone: 406-761-1543 ext. 202