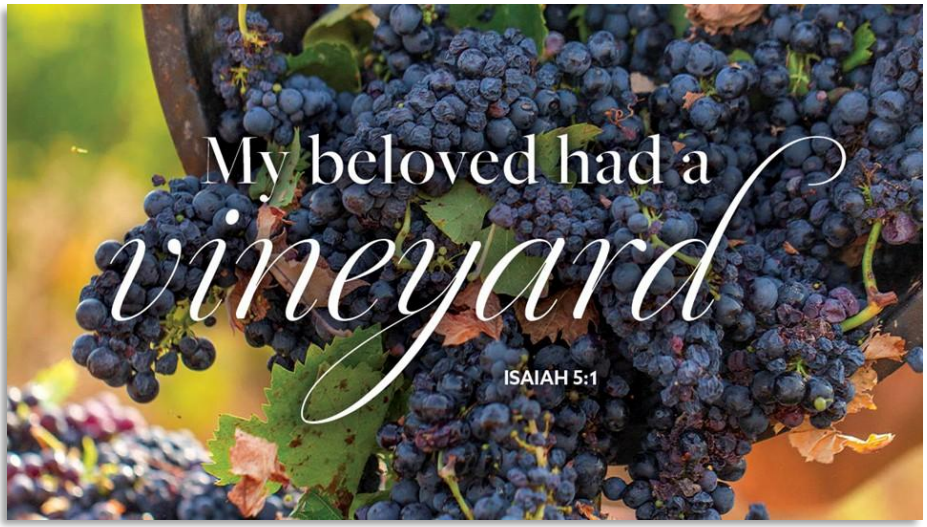
God calls us
God transforms us
God sends us
BETHEL
Lutheran Church

19TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

OCTOBER 4, 2026 9:30 AM



Bethel Lutheran Church
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A congregation of the Montana Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

As we gather for worship and prepare our hearts, we ask that you silence your cell phones for the duration of the service.

Introduction

In today's gospel reading, Jesus tells a vineyard parable, which serves as an image of Israel, the prophets' mission, and Christ's death. For Christians, the vineyard also speaks of God's love poured out in the blood of Christ, given to us for the forgiveness of sin. Grafted onto Christ the vine at baptism, we are nourished with wine and bread so that we may share Christ's sufferings and know the power of his resurrection.

Welcome and Announcements

Gathering Hymn

ELW 595 Jesus Loves Me

A Litany of Repentance and Longing

In the beginning, the Spirit over the deep;
new life daily unfolding at God's call.
Darkness and light: Good.
Skies, lands, and seas: Good.
The earth and all that fills it—plants and rocks,
the finned, the feathered, the furry: Good.
At the last, humankind in God's image: Very good.

Yet we have failed to draw from that goodness
in care for God's creation.
Forgive us, God, for the ways we have
exploited earth and its creatures.

We have misunderstood our calling
to be protectors of God's creation.
Forgive us, God, for the ways we
have exploited earth and its creatures.

We long for new relationships with God's creation
that has been entrusted to us.
Help us, God, to make a new community
with all that lives alongside us.

May the merciful God who calls us
to tend earth and all its creatures,
deepen our knowledge of creation's interweaving,
so that our lives are shaped in wholeness and peace
with all living things; in Jesus' name.
Amen.

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.

Let us pray. Holy God,
we lift to you the animal inhabitants of the earth. For those seen and unseen creatures and living things that attest to your creative power, we ask your blessing. We pray for victims of animal cruelty. Bless all who care for injured and abused animals. Comfort those who mourn for their pets and for endangered and extinct species. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ.
Amen.

PET AND ANIMAL BLESSING

HYMN

Loose Sheet *A Place In The Choir*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 5:1-7

The prophet sings a sad, parable-like love song about the relationship between God and Israel. In this song Israel is compared to a promising vineyard. Despite God's loving care, the vineyard that is Israel has brought forth "rotten grapes" of injustice and distress, when fine grapes of justice and righteousness were expected.

I'll sing a song to the one I love,
a love song about his vineyard:
The one I love had a vineyard,
a fine, well-placed vineyard.
He hoed the soil and pulled the weeds,
and planted the very best vines.
He built a lookout, built a winepress,

a vineyard to be proud of.
He looked for a vintage yield of grapes,
but for all his pains he got sour grapes.
"Now listen to what I'm telling you,
you who live in Jerusalem and Judah.
What do you think is going on
between me and my vineyard?
Can you think of anything I could have done
to my vineyard that I didn't do?
When I expected good grapes,
why did I get sour grapes?
"Well now, let me tell you
what I'll do to my vineyard:
I'll tear down its fence
and let it go to ruin.
I'll knock down the gate
and let it be trampled.
I'll turn it into a patch of weeds, untended, uncared for—
thistles and thorns will take over.
I'll give orders to the clouds:
'Don't rain on that vineyard, ever!'"
Do you get it? The vineyard of GOD-of-hosts
is the country of Israel.
All the men and women of Judah
are God's cherished garden.
God looked for a crop of justice
and saw them murdering each other.
God looked for a harvest of righteousness
and heard only the cries of victims.

Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM 80:7-15

Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
You have brought a vine out of Egypt;
you chased away nations and planted it.

You cleared the ground for it;
it took root and filled the land.
The mountains were covered by its shadow
and the towering cedar trees by its branches.
You stretched out new growth to the sea
and its branches to the river.
Why have you broken down its wall,
so that all who pass by pluck off its grapes?
The wild boar of the forest has gobbled it up,
and the beasts of the field have grazed upon it.
Turn now, O God of hosts,
look down from heaven;
Look and care for this vine;
preserve what your right hand has planted.

SECOND READING: ACTS 4:5-12

Salvation in Jesus' name is proclaimed

The day after [Peter and John healed a lame man] the rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "You are questioning us today about a kind deed in which a man who could not walk was healed. But there is something we must tell you and everyone else in Israel. This man is standing here completely well because of the power of Jesus Christ from Nazareth. You put Jesus to death on a cross, but God raised him to life. This Jesus is the stone you builders thought was worthless, and now he is the most important stone of all.

"There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name in all the world by which we must be saved."

Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

DR Open My Heart To Your Love

Open my heart to your love, oh God.

Open my eyes to your grace.
Open my life to receive your word.
Send wisdom and courage to follow your way.

The holy gospel according to Matthew the twenty-first chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 21:33-46

Jesus tells a parable to the religious leaders who are plotting his death, revealing that their plans will, ironically, bring about the fulfillment of scripture.

Jesus told the chief priests and leaders to listen to this story: A land owner once planted a vineyard. He built a wall around it and dug a pit to crush the grapes in. He also built a lookout tower. Then he rented out his vineyard and left the country.
When it was harvest time, the owner sent some servants to get his share of the grapes. But the renters grabbed those servants. They beat up one, killed one, and stoned one of them to death. He then sent more servants than he did the first time. But the renters treated them in the same way.
Finally, the owner sent his own son to the renters, because he thought they would respect him. But when they saw the man's son, they said, “Someday he will own the vineyard. Let's kill him! Then we can have it all for ourselves.” So they grabbed him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.
Jesus asked, “When the owner of that vineyard comes, what do you suppose he will do to those renters?” The chief priests and leaders answered, “He will kill them in some horrible way. Then he will rent out his vineyard to people who will give him his share of grapes at harvest time.”
Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures:

‘The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord’s doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes’?

“Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces its fruits. The one who stumbles over this stone will be broken to pieces, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard these stories, they realized that Jesus was speaking about them. They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowds, because they thought he was a prophet.

The gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE AND SERMON

Rev. Dawn Busch

HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW 835 All Creatures Worship God Most High [1,2]

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

ELW 178 Hear Our Prayer

God of grace,

Hear our prayer, hear our prayer, Lord, make us whole: peace to all people, hope for each soul. God of grace, in this place, hear now our prayer.

… Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

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

OFFERING

One of the ways we worship God is through the giving of our offerings. We receive from God the gifts of forgiveness and grace. We worship God when we give our hearts back to God through singing, through prayer, and through our offerings. Please take a moment to prayerfully consider how God is encouraging you to share your gifts. You may also give online at bethelmt.org and click on 'online giving' or scan the QR Code. We give thanks for the gifts you offer.

OFFERTORY

DR All Thanks To You

R: ***All thanks to you, O Love and light for all the blessings of the night.***
1. Throughout all time the stars have shown that without dark light is not known. *R.*

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. God of creation,
you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly.
All blessings are from you;
make us generous with what we have.
Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts
in service to you and in love to our neighbors,
today and always. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give our thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, … and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

BOB 92 Holy, Holy, Holy

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

The whole earth is full of His glory. The whole earth is full of His glory. The whole earth is full of His glory; Holy is the Lord.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus first taught us:

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Christ invites you to this table.
All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

All are welcome to receive Holy Communion. We believe that Christ comes to us in bread and wine for the forgiveness of sin and new life. Please come forward and hold out your hands in the form of a cross or a cradle to receive the body of Christ. Gluten free wafers are available, please let your server know. Choose a cup of red wine or white grape juice. If you are only able to receive one of the two elements, please know that you receive the fullness of Christ in one element. You may choose to receive a simple blessing by coming forward with your hands folded or your arms crossed. Please notify an usher if you have difficulty coming forward and communion will be brought to you.

LAMB OF GOD

W&P 76

Jesus, Lamb of God, worthy is your name.
Jesus, Lamb of God, worthy is your name.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

LH 219	*One Bread, One Body*
LH 220	*Bread of Life*
LH 232	*Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise*

COMMUNION BLESSING

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. Sustaining God,
with this bread and cup,
you nourish us with mercy and abundant life.
By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world.
Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love,
following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

Loose Sheet *Montana Blessing*

DISMISSAL

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.
Thanks be to God!

And all God's children said: **Amen**.

SERVING TODAY

Accompanist	Lynn Ryan, piano
Acolyte	Brian Boucher
Communion	

Assistants	Greta Graft, Kari Ryan, Rylee Gustafson, Emmy Kosanda
Readers	Ellie Kosanda, Taitlyn Ames, Tesher Johnson, Ginger Graft, Kirby Murphy, Elle Gustafson, Anna Boucher
Ushers	LaRae Veitch, Terry Korpela
Tech	Gabe Smith
Children's Church	Tyler Grosenick, Liz Aakre, Kendall Ryan
Hospitality	Terry Korpela, LaRae Veitch
Altar Guild	Mary Gernaat, Terree Wozny
Counters	Pam Dougherty, Terry Korpela

Flowers are given by Roger and Sue Reppe.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today at Bethel we celebrate the 19th Sunday after Pentecost.

A special welcome and thank you to our **LOGOs Youth Ministry** for assisting in leading worship this morning.

In honor of Francis of Assisi, Bethel offers a **special blessing for pets and animals**. We give thanks for the animals who bring companionship, joy, and love into our lives and celebrate God's care for all creation.

Gathering Place conversations offer opportunities for you to share your thoughts and understand the importance of renting well in ways that fulfill God's mission for Bethel. Opportunities to share your thoughts and comments: Today! After worship at 11:00 am in the Fellowship Hall, Tuesday October 6th at 6:30 pm and next Sunday October 11th at 11:00 am. You only need to attend one session. Your voice is important!

THIS WEEK

Tuesday 10/6

- Electric City Bible Study – 7:00 am (Zoom)
- Men's Breakfast – 7:00 am (Fellowship)
- Gathering Place Use Conversation – 6:30 pm (Fellowship Hall)

Wednesday 10/7

- LOGOs Youth Ministry – 5:30 pm
- *High School LOGOs begins October 21st*

Thursday 10/8
- Jeremiah Book Study* – 10:00 am (Fellowship Hall)
- Electric City Chorale rehearsal – 7:00 pm (sanctuary)
- Exec Board meeting – 6:30 pm (Zoom)

Friday 10/9
- Bethel office is closed
- Wedding Rehearsal – 5:30 pm

Saturday 10/10
- Wedding of Kirk Skari and Brittney Hagberg – 3:30 pm

NEXT WEEK

Sunday 10/11
- Worship in-person and live stream 9:30 am.
- World Hunger Sunday
- Gathering Place Use Conversation – 11:00 am (Fellowship Hall)
- Great Divide 4H – 2:00 pm (Fellowship Hall)
- Running Free 4H - 4:00 pm (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday 10/13
- Electric City Bible Study – 7:00 am (Zoom)
- Men's Breakfast – 7:00 am (Fellowship Hall)
- Council Meeting – 6:30 pm (Fellowship Hall)

Wednesday 10/14
- NO LOGOs Youth Ministry
- Finance Committee Budget Meeting – 6:30 pm (Fellowship Hall)

Thursday 10/15
- Jeremiah Book Study* – 10:00 am (Fellowship Hall)
- Singing Bowls Sound Meditation – 6:00 pm (sanctuary)

Friday 10/16
- Bethel office is closed

Saturday 10/17
- MT Synod LMA Retreat – 8:00 am (Fellowship Hall & sanctuary)
- Handbell Choir Rehearsal – 10:00 am (Gathering Place)
- Close Knit Crafters – 10:00 am (Gathering Place, classroom)

*Zoom option available, please email the Bethel Office at bethelgf.church@gmail.com to receive a link.

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