



Bethel Lutheran Church

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FRIENDS OF CHRIST ~ ALL OF OUR PEOPLE

The Rev. Zachary Wright ~ *Pastor*

Mike Beiter (410-808-1074) ~ *Congregation President*

Sylke Bargsten (254-394-0582) ~ *Director of Music*

Ruth Ferretti (410-398-4062) ~ *Flower Coordinator*

The Rev. Bill Gohl ~ *Delaware-Maryland Synod Bishop*

***We celebrate the promise that all people are loved
and enough in Jesus Christ as we worship, learn,
and serve together.***

Second Sunday of Easter

Holy Humor Sunday

April 27, 2025

*In our Lutheran Tradition, liturgy reminds us that we are one in Christ, so we do it together! You are invited to respond in community with the **bold print** and stand in body or spirit when indicated by the asterisks (*).*

EASTER PROCLAMATION & WELCOME

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

PRELUDE

*EASTER PROCLAMATION (*based on John 20:1-18*)

It was early in the morning. Still dark. The dawn just starting to cut through the fog. The air hung heavy with expectation, as if the earth itself were holding its breath.

The echoes of the cross linger. His voice still rings out: It is finished. Into your hands I commit my spirit. The story comes to us in pieces and fragments, hints and images:

A vineyard garden, grapes ready for the harvest. A stone, rolled away. The guards asleep at its side. A pile of clothes, folded in an empty tomb.

Peter and John, running in with disbelief. Walking out with questions and with hope.

But Mary stays behind. To weep in the garden. And we weep with her. There is so much loss. So much grief. So much death.

With her we look up, and through her tears we see angels, seated in victory on top of the stone.

Do not be afraid, they tell us. He is not here. Why do you look for the living among the dead? He. Is. Not. Here.

From the garden she hears a voice: Why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?

She still cannot see. The sun is rising. She is muttering with explanations, but Mary's heart starts beating with tremors of hope. Whom do you seek? He is not here.

And like a voice from heaven, she hears that voice. The voice she is longing for. The gardener speaks her name: Mary.

Jesus looks at you and Jesus speaks your name. The world is new as he speaks your name. You are made new as he speaks your name. What the angels said was true and it is true today.

Jesus is alive. Jesus walks. His heart beats in victory. Easter is announced by every breath he takes. Easter means that love has won. Death is finished. Satan is doomed. Evil is conquered. God is good. Love's redeeming work is done. It is finished. He is not dead.
Alleluia! Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

*OPENING HYMN: *Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Alleluia!*
(ELW 369)

*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 (*in unison*)

O Great Laughing God, we come into your presence with joy and longing to be surprised. We thank you that you have given to us the gift of laughter and delight. These things give hints as to the nature of your purpose for us and for all the earth. May we find that in giving up to laughter there is healing and hope and abundance and blessing. Tickle our souls with the brush of your Spirit to renew our worship and our living. Amen.

FIRST LESSON: *Acts 5:27-32* (pg. 94)
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSIVE READING: *Psalms 150*

- ¹ Hallelujah! Praise God in the holy temple;
praise God in the mighty firmament.
- ² **Praise God for mighty acts;
praise God for exceeding greatness.**
- ³ Praise God with trumpet sound;
praise God with lyre and harp.
- ⁴ **Praise God with tambourine and dance;
praise God with strings and pipe.**
- ⁵ Praise God with resounding cymbals;
praise God with loud clanging cymbals.
- ⁶ **Let everything that has breath
praise the Lord. Hallelujah!**

SECOND LESSON: *Revelation 1:4-8* (pg. 193)
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**



*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: *Halle, Halle, Hallelujah (ELW 172)*

*GOSPEL LESSON: *John 20:19-31 (pg. 88)*

The Holy Gospel according to St. John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

~Gospel is read~

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY: *This Joyful Eastertide (ELW 391)*

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God,

who made us in God's image.

We live, we love, we laugh,

because we are like God.

We believe in Jesus Christ,

The Son of God, our Lord and Savior.

He had the last laugh on the devil

when He rose from the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,

coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Son.

Our counselor, our guide, our motivator –

Our deepest most profound joy!

Forgive us, Lord, when we take ourselves too seriously,

when we don't claim the happiness that is rightfully ours

as your children,

when we forget that you will have the last laugh in this world.

Restore to us the joy of our salvation,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

THE PEACE OF THE CHRIST

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

OFFERTORY PRAYER

*Offerings can be placed in the offering plate on the small table as you walk in to the sanctuary. **Bethel Lutheran and St. Mary Anne's Episcopal are joining together to raise money for Nicanor and St. Mary Anne's Outreach to ensure our neighbors are fed. With the help of a \$1,000 matching grant through the DE-MD Synod (ELCA) Hunger Task Force, we are looking to raise at least \$1,000 together to split between two great organizations. Drop your donation in an envelope or make sure you designate "Hunger Appeal" on the check memo line. Every gift is needed. Your generosity matters!***

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also 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 God our thanks and praise.

***WORDS OF INSTITUTION & LORD'S PRAYER**

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.



DISTRIBUTION OF THE SACRAMENT

POST COMMUNION BLESSING & PRAYER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***BENEDICTION**

Alleluia! Christ is risen. **He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

May God grant you a soul that treasures all that is good, doesn't frighten easily when life goes awry, and finds the means to hold things in their place.

May God grant you the good humor to take a joke, discover joy in life, and share love with others.

May the God of surprises bring smiles and joys to the everyday and ordinary.

Almighty God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN: *That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright (ELW 384)

***SENDING**

Go in peace. Serve the risen Christ!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

***POSTLUDE**

SERVER SCHEDULE

	Greeter	Reader	Usher	Acolyte
4/27	Ruth Noel	Paul Markkula	Phil Igo	Mitchell Brown
5/4	Nick Carter	Sandy Matthews	Bill Matthews	Alex Pelino

If you would like to help serve on a Sunday morning, let Pastor Zach know (pastorzach.blcne@gmail.com).

SERVICE NOTES

A **special and warm welcome** to everyone here this morning – seekers, members, and guests. We are glad you are here to join our church family for worship!

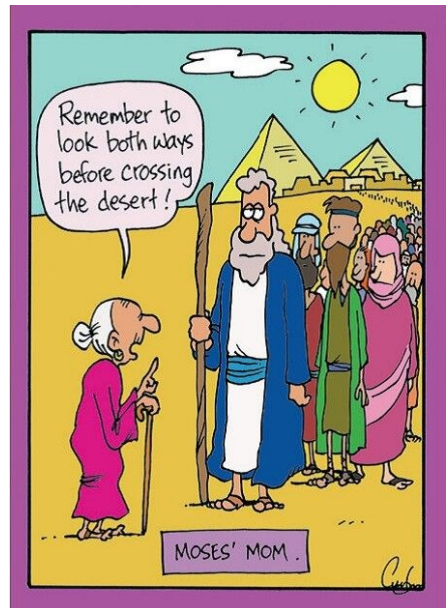
For worship, you'll need the bulletin and the cranberry-colored hymnal in the pew back in front of you. The liturgy is indicated by page number and can be found in the front half of the hymnal. The hymns are indicated by hymn number and are found in the back half of the hymnal.

If you find yourself needing to leave the worship space for any reason (cough, noisy child, overstimulated, etc.), the service is being livestreamed to the television in Fellowship Hall. Feel free to worship in there and come back into the sanctuary when you're ready.

COMMUNION INSTRUCTIONS

The communion table is God's table. Jesus invites all who desire to partake of His body and blood to come forward and receive God's amazing grace in the promises of forgiveness and eternal life. At **communion distribution**, please come forward to the altar rail, filling in the space from right-to-left. Pastor Zach will hand you a wafer to eat. You may then take wine from the tray (center ring is grape juice), drink it, and dispose of your cup in the basket as you return to your seat. If you want a blessing instead, please indicate this by folding your arms across your chest.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kids Club is up and going again for Round 2. If you're available to hang out on Wednesday afternoons, sign-up in the back.

The next Sewing Class will be Saturday, May 17 from 2-4pm in Fellowship Hall. Sign-up on the sheet in the back if you are able to attend.

Vacation Bible School will be here before we know it! If you're interested in helping, let Pastor Zach know. Keep an eye out for a meeting in the next month.

We continue our care for God's creation with our Adopt-a-Highway Clean-Ups on our portion of Rt. 272. We'll meet at 8:45am in the church parking lot and we'll wrap up before 10:30am. Mark your calendars to help out: May 17, July 19, August 23, & October 11.

OUR STEWARDSHIP

April 13	Worship—50	Offering—\$2,024
April 20	Worship—103	Offering—\$2,495

Please fill the wood food basket in the back for the St. Mary Anne's food pantry. Specific needs: **shelf-stable milk, add-water-only pancake mix, canned meat (tuna, chicken, Vienna sausages), peanut butter & jelly, and cereal** *Make sure to check those expiration dates.



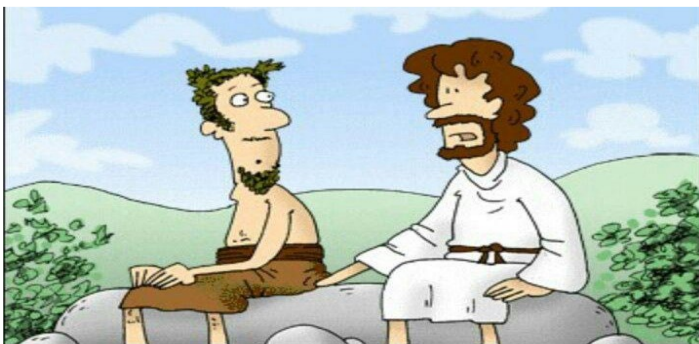
If you would like to give online, you can use the QR code on the left, which will redirect you to our giving website.

Thank you for you for your faithfulness and generosity.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mike Beiter	Linda Stoflet	Cathy Heaps	Rayanne Lavery
Steve Bird	Terry Fuss	Stacy Igo	Pastor Zach

If you have a question, concern, or a new idea, make sure to tell someone!



I APPRECIATE THE EFFORT, BUT THE WHOLE 'SITTING ON MY RIGHT HAND' THING IS NOT AS LITERAL AS YOU SEEM TO THINK

12-05-2011

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Blue print indicates a church event.

Regular print indicates an outside community event.

Sunday, April 27th—Holy Humor / Second Sunday of Easter

- 9:30am Youth Sunday School
- 10:30am Holy Humor Sunday Worship
- 1:00pm Korean Church Bible Study
- 5:00pm Youtherans Gathering (St. Paul's, Newark)

Monday, April 28th

- 6:30pm Pastor Tom Bible Study
- 7:00pm Sisters of Serenity NA Group

Tuesday, April 29th

- 6:30pm North East AA Group

Wednesday, April 30th

- 10:30am Korean Church Bible Study
- 1:30pm Bethel Kids Club

Thursday, May 1st

- 8:30am Men's Bible Study (meet at JoJo's in Elkton)
- 12:00pm Children's Sermon via Bethel Beacon, YouTube, & Facebook
- 4:00pm Nicanor
- 6:30pm Women's AA Group

Friday, May 2nd

Saturday, May 3rd

Sunday, May 4th—Third Sunday of Easter

- 9:30am Youth Sunday School
- 10:30am Traditional Worship Service
- 11:45am Celebration Sunday Fellowship
- 1:00pm Korean Church Bible Study