

Lord, how often should I forgive?

MATTHEW 18:21



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.***

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 13, 2026

*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 (*).*

WELCOME

PRELUDE

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

Most merciful God, **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

~time of silent confession~

God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and grants forgiveness to all who call upon his name. And so, may Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you, and strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*OPENING HYMN: *Forgive Our Sins As We Forgive* (ELW 605)

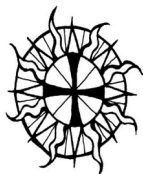
*APOSTOLIC GREETING

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.

*KYRIE: *Have Mercy on Us, Lord* (Setting Ten, see insert)

*CANTICLE OF PRAISE: *Glory Be To God in Heaven*
(Setting Ten, see insert)



***PRAYER OF THE DAY** (*in unison*)

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

FIRST LESSON: *Genesis 50:15-21* (page 37)

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

RESPONSORIAL READING: *Psalm 103:1-3, 8-13*

- ¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.
- ² **Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all God's benefits—**
- ³ who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases
- ⁸ **Lord, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**
- ⁹ you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.
- ¹⁰ **You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**
- ¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.
- ¹² **As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**
- ¹³ As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O Lord.

SECOND LESSON: *Romans 14:1-12* (page 124)

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

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:** *Alleluia! Lord and Savior*

(*Setting Ten, see insert*)

***GOSPEL LESSON:** *Matthew 18:21-35*
(page 15)

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

~Gospel is read~

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON



*HYMN OF THE DAY: *Our Father, We Have Wandered* (ELW 606)

*THE APOSTLES' CREED

**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 PEOPLE

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

THE PEACE OF THE CHRIST

The peace of 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.

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (*Setting Ten, see insert*)

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 our thanks and praise.



***SANCTUS** (*Setting Ten, see insert*)

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of pow'r and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

***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**

The God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another in accordance with Christ Jesus.

The God of hope, fill you with all joy and peace and believing so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The God of grace – Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit – bless you now and forever.

Amen.

***SENDING HYMN:** *Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death* (ELW 452)

***SENDING**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

Thanks be to God.

***POSTLUDE**



FLOWERS

The flowers are dedicated to the glory of God, by the Matthews family in celebration of Sandy's birthday!

SERVER SCHEDULE

	Greeter	Reader	Usher	Acolyte
9/13	Terry Fuss	Juliana Mortenson	Gretchen Brown	Nathan Pelino
9/20	Janice Beiter	Heather Bolton	Bill Matthews	Gwen Bolton

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 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.

All hymns are under Bethel's CCLI license (#11313912) and streaming license (#20849338). All rights reserved, unless otherwise indicated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

North East Recovery Service at St. Mary Anne's Episcopal (315 S. Main St., North East) is tonight, September 13 at 6:00PM. A monthly service on the second Sunday will have great music to witness to all, especially those in recovery, Christ's unfailing mercy, redemption and grace. Those in recovery and support groups are encouraged to attend, as well as family and friends. Supper will be served after the service in the Parish Center

Kids Club started back up this past Wednesday. We need volunteers to be eyes and ears during our time together on Wednesdays from 1:30PM-3:00PM. Interested? Sign-up in the back.

In the weeks leading up to our Blessing of the Animals service on Sunday, October 4, we are going to collect pet food and other items (old towels and blankets) for Cecil County Animal Services. Please bring them in and put them in the bin in the back of the sanctuary.

We will have a kick-off Youtherans Gathering at Grace, Hockessin on Sunday, September 20 from 4-6pm. We'll play games, eat pizza, and go over the calendar for the year. Additionally, we'll be talking about the ELCA Youth Gathering next summer in Minneapolis.

Our last Adopt-A-Highway Clean-Ups will be Saturday, October 10. We'll gather and head out in crews at 8:45AM to our portion of 272 and be done around 10:15AM.

OUR STEWARDSHIP

August 30	Worship—44	Offering—\$1,983
September 6	Worship—40	Offering—\$2,175

Please fill the food donation bin 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, which will redirect you to our giving platform.

Thank you for you for your faithfulness and generosity.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mike Beiter	Linda Stoflet	Cathy Heaps	Ryanne Lavery
Steve Bird	Terry Fuss	Stacy Igo	Lori Scott
Pastor Zach			

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

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Blue print indicates a church event.

Regular print indicates an outside community event.

Sunday, September 13th—Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

- 10:30am Traditional Worship Service
- 10:45am Youth Sunday School
- 11:45am Praise Team Meeting
- 6:00pm Recovery Service (St. Mary Anne's Episcopal, 315 S Main St.)

Monday, August 14th

- 7:00pm Sisters of Serenity NA Meeting

Tuesday, September 15th

- 6:30pm North East AA Meeting

Wednesday, September 16th

- 2:00pm Bethel Kids Club
- 5:00pm Choir Rehearsal
- 7:00pm AA Meeting
- 7:00pm Al-Anon Meeting

Thursday, September 17th

- 9:00am Men's Bible Study
- 12:00pm Gospel Glimpse (via Facebook, YouTube, and Beacon)
- 4:00pm Nicanor Feeding Ministry
- 6:30pm Women's AA Meeting

Friday, September 18th

- 8:00pm AA Meeting

Saturday, September 19th

- 5:30pm Pastor Tom Bible Study

Sunday, September 20th—Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

- 10:30am Traditional Worship Service
- 10:45am Youth Sunday School