The Bible is more than a book: it is God's love letter to humanity.

We have more reason to trust its claims
than those of any other book in history:
because of the large number of ancient manuscripts,
and the consistent message of God's grace and truth.



6th Sunday after Epiphany February 17, 2019

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH & PRESCHOOL

5110 Grand Avenue, Gurnee, Illinois 60031 – (847) 244-9647

Pastor Ben Squires

Cell phone: 224-419-5519 or email: pastor@bethelgurnee.org

Katrina Johns, Equipping Coordinator

Direct line: 224-623-0800 or email: katrina@bethelgurnee.org

Website: www.BethelGurnee.org

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Holy Communion: 1st, 3rd, 5th Sunday of the month Becky Lanzito & Karen Leicht - Organists, Ann Souza - Music Director, Mandi Diver – Choir/New Music Accompanist

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

We are pleased you chose to be with us in worship today, and pray the Lord blesses you as he has blessed us with your presence. Our goal is to help people find the right place for them to hear God's word and serve His mission. We'd love to support you in that spiritual journey. Please take a moment to complete an attendance card and place it in the Offering plate or give to an usher. This card will help us connect with you.

HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord's Supper is celebrated according to the Lutheran Confessions based on the teaching Jesus gave his disciples and us that he is truly present in this meal. Confident that our sins are forgiven, we experience our oneness with him and each other as he gathers us at his table. His true body and blood, given and shed for us, we share in this meal as he invites in Matthew 26:26-28, "Take and eat; this is My Body ... This is My Blood..." Baptized Christians sharing these beliefs are invited to receive Communion. All others are invited to the altar rail for a blessing. Wine can be taken by common chalice, individual cup, or by dipping your wafer into the chalice. Please address questions to the Elders or the Pastor. **Non-alcoholic wine is in purple-colored cups.**

NURSERY

We have two rooms available for your use. When the service is in the sanctuary, the nursery is down the hall just past the restrooms. If the service is held in the gym, the nursery is in the youth room at the far end of the gym.

SERVING TODAY Sunday 8:00AM

Sunday 10:45AM

JJ Jones Jack Warneke
Elder: Mike Bandman Bob Souza

Comm/Asst. Elder:Mike BandmanBob SouzaAcolytes:Kelsi Mulley, Kaylee LeichtJoseph Kaiser, Cameron FlemingLay Readers:Karen Kozlik, Joanne HeidlaufLarry Peters, Linda Peters

Ushers: Don Heidlauf, Al Diercks Lance Rasmussen, Scott Gutzke
Greeters: Brazda Family, Daluga Family Bill Ratzburg Family, Rosenthal Family

Fellowship: LWML

Elders:

Feb. Altar Guild:Margie TatgenhorstDawn WerfelmannFeb. Counters:Chris MasonDiane Sanders

TODAY'S FLOWERS ARE PROVIDED BY:

Margie & Ted Tatgenhorst in celebration of their 48th wedding anniversary and the Souza family celebrating Jay's 16th birthday.

In Today's Prayers

If you have something you'd like added, please go to one of the Prayer Stands, write down your request, & put in the plastic rack.

In our weekly Worship Prayers, we lift up praises, thanksgivings, requests, and concerns to our Lord. In order to help us pray to God about the wholeness of our lives in the world, we have a schedule for when we will focus on specific areas for prayer. Any immediate needs will always take priority, but in general, we will follow this schedule. Please note that this means on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month, Pastor will speak the names of everyone on our health concerns list, but on other Sundays, this will be lifted up only as a general prayer for health and healing.

3rd Sunday

Government & Safety

Local, State and Federal government and leaders Local police and fire departments

Local concerns

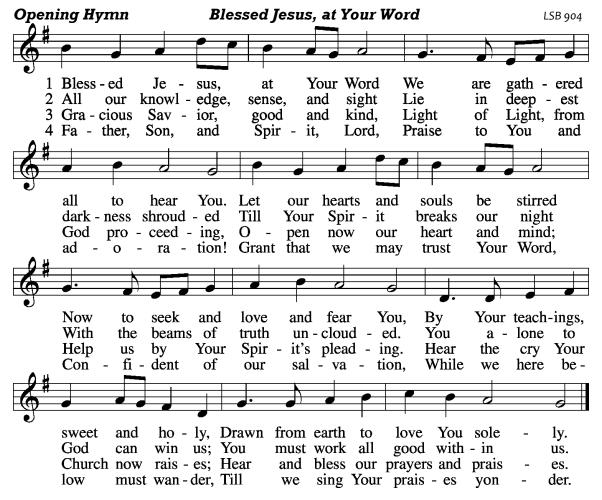
Marc & Pedro, men who burglarized Bethel, 30 months probation/rehabilitation The people around us who do not know Jesus and salvation in His Gospel

Congregation: Spiritual Conversation

Help us talk about spiritual things that are the source and foundation for life, and build relationships and friendships that include these conversations

A LITURGY OF DOURT AND HOPE

Worship in a traditional order drawing on along with words of doubt and hope from Scripture, poets, and writers.



Invocation Jude 1-2,20-22,25

P: To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

- C: To the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.
- P: We come to be built up in our most holy faith, building one another up through the Word of God. God the Father calls on us to have compassion on one another:
- C: "Have mercy on those who doubt."

- P: God the Son calls on us to support one another as we wait for His mercy that leads to eternal life:
- C: Jesus is able to keep us from stumbling and to present us blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy. Amen.

Confession of Sins

Based on "Emmanuel" by Aaron Niequist

- P: Can we just admit together that we're not fine?
- C: Because I'm not fine, and you're not fine.
- P: Can we just admit together that we're afraid?
- C: Because I'm afraid, and you're afraid.
- P: Can we just admit together that we have doubts?
- C: Because I have doubts, and you have doubts.
- P: Can we just admit together that we're not free?
- C: Because I'm not free, and I want to be.
- P: If you're not free, then call out to God with me:
- C: Emmanuel,

God with us today,

We humbly call out Your Name:

Emmanuel.

As near as our need,

As close as the air that we breathe,

Emmanuel.

Lord, have mercy.

- P: Can we just admit together that we have failed?
- C: Because I have failed, and you have failed.
- P: Can we just admit that our hands aren't clean?
- C: And our hearts aren't clean, and they'll never be.
- P: Until we're freed, and mercy sings.
- C: Emmanuel,

God with us today,

We desperately cling to Your Name:

Emmanuel,

As near as our need,

As close as the air that we breathe.

Emmanuel.

Lord, have mercy. Amen.

Absolution (Forgiveness)Based on liturgy by Bernie Seter and "Emmanuel" by Aaron Niequist

P: Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, does not desire the death of sinners, which means He does not desire your death. But rather He calls you to turn from your wicked ways and find life in the life of Christ. He has had mercy upon you. He graciously forgives your sins through the death and resurrection of Your Lord Jesus Christ. He strengthens you by the power of the Holy Spirit to amend your sinful lives according to His will, and will keep you in His grace until that day when He will take you to be with Him for eternity. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, in His stead and by His command, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Emmanuel,
God with us today,
In thanksgiving we praise Your Name:
Emmanuel,
Who came near so we are freed,
As close as the Word that we hear.
Emmanuel.

The Lord has had mercy on us.

- P: Now we can admit together that we've failed,
- C: Because I am forgiven, and you are forgiven.
- P: Now we can admit together that our hands aren't clean,
- C: Because Jesus made me clean, and He made you clean.
- P: If you're now free, then call out to God with me:
- C: Emmanuel,

God with us today,
In thanksgiving we praise Your Name:
Emmanuel.

The Lord has had mercy on us. Amen.

Anthem "Wonderful Words of Life" Adult Choir

• Use the anthem's music and words to help you to meditate on God's Word and His truth for you today. Maintain this as meditative time.

Sing them over again to me, wonderful words of life; Let me more of their beauty see, wonderful words of life; Words of life and beauty teach me faith and duty.

Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life. Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

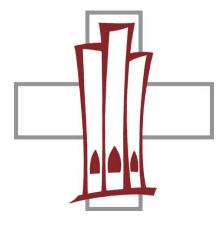
Christ, the blessed one, gives to all wonderful words of life; Sinner, list to the loving call, wonderful words of life; All so freely given, wooing us to heaven.

Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life. Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

Sweetly echo the gospel call, wonderful words of life; Offer pardon and peace to all, wonderful words of life; Jesus, only Savior, sanctify forever.

Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life. Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life





Explore God Collect (Prayer of the Today's Explore God Question)

P: Let us pray. O God, You have given us Your holy Word to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. We implore You to bless our reading of the Bible. Enlighten our hearts and minds as we read, and open our ears to hear the Gospel proclaimed, that by Your Spirit we may earnestly hold fast to Him who is the way, the truth, and the life: Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Jeremiah 17:5-8 (ESV)

⁵Thus says the LORD:

"Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD.

⁶He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come.

He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land.

7"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD.

⁸He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit."

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm Reading Psalm 1 (ESV)

¹Blessèd is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;

²but his delight is in the [instruction] of the LORD, and on his [instruction] he meditates day and night.

³He is like a tree planted by streams of water

that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither.

In all that he does, he prospers.

⁴The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

⁵Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,

nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;

⁶for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.



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Holy Gospel

Luke 6:17-26 (ESV)

¹⁷And he came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, ¹⁸who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. ¹⁹And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from him and healed them all.

²⁰And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said:

"Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹"Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.

"Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.

²²"Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man!

²³Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

²⁴"But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

²⁵"Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry.

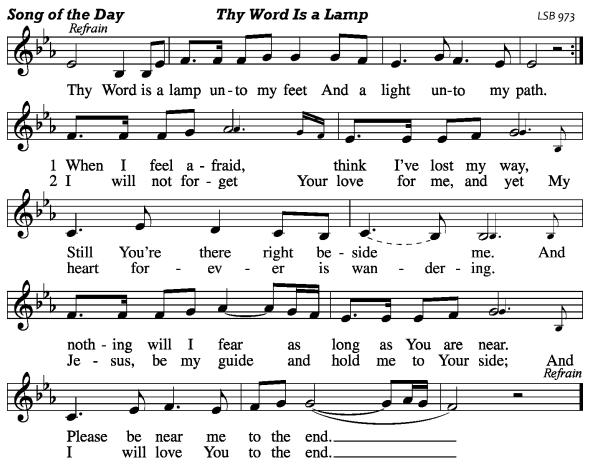
"Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

²⁶"Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets."

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.





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Sermon

"Is the Bible Reliable?"

From Bethel's Membership description:

Becoming a member of the gathering of Disciples at Bethel means:

Trusting that Bethel is seeking to teach faith in Jesus according to God's Word as best expressed in Lutheran theology according to the Lutheran Confessions, knowing that even if you have trouble understanding every teaching, Bethel seeks God's truth and not our own truth.

What does "membership" mean?

Confession of Faith (adapted from the Apostles' Creed)

First Nations Version

Our Father and Creator, the One Above Us All, made all things in the world above and the earth below.

Jesus, his special born Son, was fathered by the Holy Spirit and was born into this world through a virgin named Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, a ruler of the Roman people, who had him nailed to a tree pole, the cross, where he bled to death.

He was buried and then went down to the world of the dead.

On the third day he came back to life, never to die again.

He returned to his Father in the world above and sat down at his powerful right hand.

One day he will return to this earth to make the final decision about the eternity of the living and the dead.

After he went to the world above, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to us from the Father, to live in and through us.

There is only one holy and world-wide group of believers in Jesus —a Sacred Family called his Church.

All of the Holy Spirit's holy people sit together equally in this Family and share his Sacred Food at his table.

He has forgiven us and set us free from all of our broken ways, and all who trust in him, even though they cross over to death, will be brought back to life again, to a life that will never end. Amen.

Offering & Prayer Requests

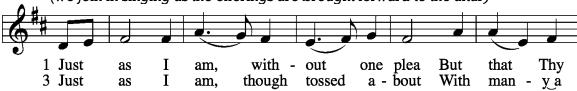
In addition to the prayer requests already received, Pastor will pause here to see if there are additional requests. Prayers can be thanksgivings, joy, requests for yourself, or requests for others.

Offertory

Just as I Am, without One Plea

LSB 570, sts. 1,3,5

(we join in singing as the offerings are brought forward to the altar)





Thou blood was shed for me And that bidd'st me come con - flict, man - y a doubt, Fight-ings with and fears with - in,



Just as I am, Thou wilt receive, Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve; Because Thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Prayers of the Church

based on Langston Hughes' poem "Prayer [2]"

- P: Gather up in the arms of your mercy
- C: The sick, the depraved The desperate, the tired,
- P: All the scum of our weary city. Gather up
- C: In the arms of your mercy.
- P: Gather up
- C: In the arms of your love—
- P: Those who expect
- C: No love from above.
- P: For them—for us—
- C: We pray now.

Pastor then offers the Prayers of the Church

* Jesus reached out to people considered by others to be "scum". We reach out to all people. And we ourselves may even feel like "scum" sometimes. But look at how God responds with love.

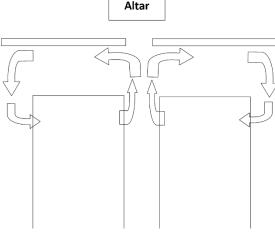
The Lord's Supper: What We Believe

All Christians who are baptized and have been instructed are invited to receive Communion with us if you believe as we do—that the bread is the body of Christ, and the wine is the blood of Christ, truly present for us for the forgiveness of our sins.

If this is a new teaching to you, or if this is different than you believe, we ask that you wait to commune until we've had a further chance to talk. We invite those who are not communing to come to the rail, cross your arms, and receive a blessing from the Lord.

Communion Distribution

- Pastor distributes the bread, and the Elders distribute the wine—with individual cups or common cup. The individual trays also contain alcohol-removed wine in the center of each tray in the purple cups.
- Each side will be ushered from the center aisle to the communion rail, row by row, starting with the front.
- Go to the rail on your side of the sanctuary, filling in starting with the outside wall towards the center.
- Once you have received the elements, you
 may remain at the rail for prayer and leave at your own pace.
- Return to your seat using the outside aisle.



P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: We come to the altar of God. Let us pray:

Father of the beaten down

Lover of the strong and proud

God of every class, from the greenest grass to the underpass

You're the Maker of us all

Father of each citizen

Lover of each immigrant

God of everyone who has ever been an alien

You're Creator of us all

Father of the most oppressed

Lover of the least impressed,

C: Thank You for seeing our need, Loving us, crying for us, dying for us, rising for us, feeding us, returning for us.

P: We were all once aliens,

And we're all so full of sin,

But in Jesus' name we are welcomed in, as citizens,

A brand new family, old and young,

From every nation, faith, and tongue,

A new creation has begun.

C: In Jesus' name I've been changed, I've been filled, I've been found, I've been freed, I've been saved! In Jesus' blood I've been loved, I've been cleansed, And redeemed and released and rearranged. In Jesus' name we are changed, we are called, We are chosen, adopted, and named! In Jesus' blood we are loved, we are healed, We're forgiven and free of our shame!

The Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

All: 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.

Words of Institution

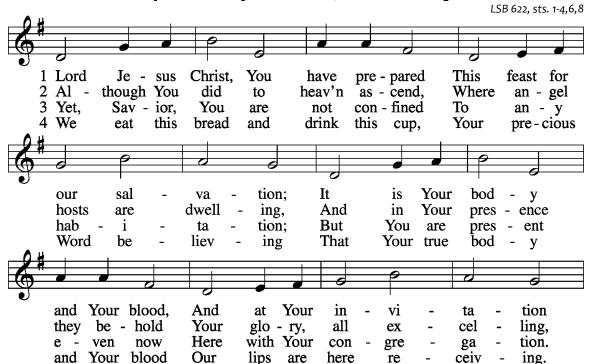
Pax Domini (The Peace of the Lord)

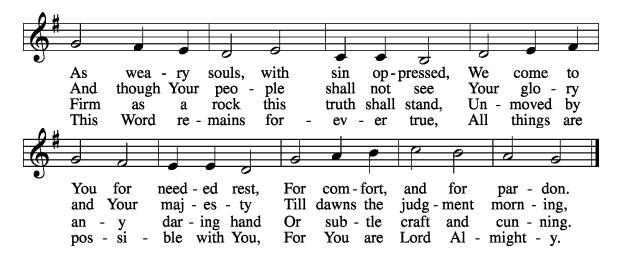
P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

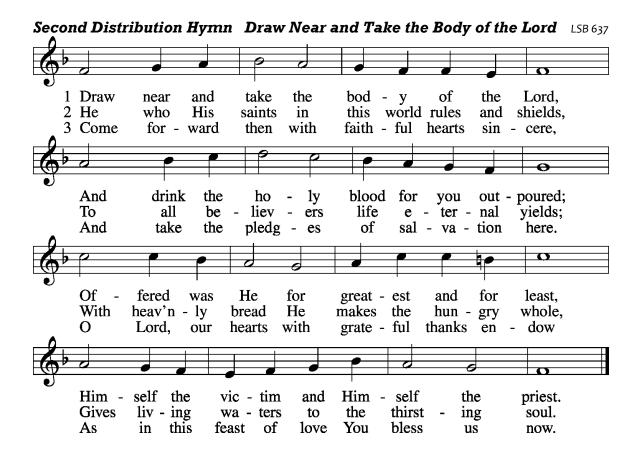
(We greet one another in peace saying "God's peace" or "The Lord be with you.")

First Distribution Hymn Lord Jesus Christ, You Have Prepared





- 6 Lord, I believe what You have said; Help me when doubts assail me. Remember that I am but dust, And let my faith not fail me. Your supper in this vale of tears Refreshes me and stills my fears And is my priceless treasure.
- 8 For Your consoling supper, Lord,
 Be praised throughout all ages!
 Preserve it, for in ev'ry place
 The world against it rages.
 Grant that this sacrament may be
 A blessèd comfort unto me
 When living and when dying.



Post-Communion Prayer

P: Let us pray. Thank You, Jesus, for seeing our need, giving us Your body and blood for our forgiveness and salvation. Thank You for loving us, crying for us, dying for us, rising for us, feeding us, and one day returning for us. Keep us believing until that day.

C: Amen.

Benediction (Blessing)

Colossians 1:19-20

P: God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Jesus Christ, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross. You are reconciled to God the Father, through the work of God the Son, and kept in this faith by God the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.



Announcements

Acknowledgements

This liturgy arranged and written by the Rev. Dr. Benjamin C. Squires. © 2019. Portions adapted from Aaron Niequist's songs and texts for A New Liturgy (Nos. 1, 2, & 3). © Aaron Niequist. www.anewliturgy.com

"Absolution" adapted from LCMS World Relief Lenten Series, by Rev. Bernie Seter.

"Confession of Faith" by Rainsong/First Nations Version. © 2013 Rain Ministries, Inc. All Rights Reserved. "Prayers of the Church" adapted from "Prayer [2]", The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes. © 1994 Estate of L. Hughes.

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LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

The future is in your hands

You, yes...you, are needed. YOUR opinion matters.

If you call Bethel your church home, you can make a difference. Whether you come every week or every once and a while...you are important to the future of Bethel. We are in a position of needing to equip and encourage leaders. In order to successfully move forward, you are invited to attend this summit.

Essentials

- > Current needs in leadership
- Preventing burn-out
- Engaging the whole congregation in the vision instead of just a small group
- Celebrate where God is already at work

March 16, 2019 9:00am – 12:00pm

Bethel Lutheran Church, Fellowship Hall Katrina@BethelGurnee.org, 224-623-0800

Please RSVP to https://tinyurl.com/bethelgurneesummit