

The Pathway to Faith

2017 Summer Sermon Series

From Closed to Open

about Change in Their Lives Week #1



It means questioning your own worldview
and contemplating a Christian perspective.

Thursday, July 20, and Sunday, July 23, 2017

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH & PRESCHOOL

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The Pathway to Faith

2017 Summer Sermon Series



This series of sermons will tie in with the GO! Prayer Room emphasis on the five thresholds to faith—the steps that someone goes through from unbelief to discipleship. These sermons will help us reflect on how God is at work in the people around us and the ways He can use us—even in small ways, like being a Christian friend who can be trusted by a non-Christian.



This series focus is inspired by *Once Was Lost* by Don Everts & Doug Schaupp. If you would like to read along, please let an Elder or Pastor know today, and we can get you a copy. Pastor is inviting readers to share their thoughts, questions, and stories that come to mind as they read.

Shifts Along the Pathway (and sermon dates)

- From Mistrust to Trust (June 1/4 & June 8/11)
- From Complacent to Curious (June 22/25 & June 29/July 2)
- From Closed to Open about Change in Their Life (July 20/23 & July 27/30)
- From Meandering to Seeking (August 3/6 & August 10/13)
- From Lost to Found (August 17/20 & August 24/27)

Why Learn about the Pathway to Faith? (Evert & Schaupp, p. 25)

- *Frees us to learn about what others are experiencing*
- *Recognizes the mysterious nature of the Spirit at work in someone*
- *Moves us from activism (i.e.:pushy) to a humble place of wonder & prayer*
- *Allows us to appreciate the organic, unique way God works in each person*
- *Leads us to empathize with our friends & where they are on the pathway*

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Thursday 6:30 p.m. & Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Holy Communion: 1st, 3rd, 5th Sundays and the Thursday prior
Becky Lanzito & Karen Leicht - Organists, Ann Souza - Music Director,
Mandi Stilson – 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.

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

Thursday 6:30 p.m.

Sunday 9:00 a.m.

<i>Elder:</i>	JJ Jones	Bob Souza
<i>Comm/Asst. Elder:</i>	OPEN	Al Diercks
<i>Acolytes:</i>	Jacob Herstowski, Nathan Faitsch	Nathan Stutzman, Jake Kruse
<i>Ushers:</i>	Don Heidlauf, OPEN	Morrie Cook, Tera Redman, OPEN
<i>Lay Readers:</i>	Tim Faitsch, Lynn Faitsch	Karla Stewart, Thor Peplow
<i>Greeters:</i>	Faitsch Family, Ted & Margie Tatgenhorst	Jim & Donna Gerken, Dave & Sue Hoffmeister
<i>July Altar Guild:</i>	Diane Rogala	Diane Sanders
<i>July Counters:</i>	David and Cheryl Ross	

ALTAR FLOWERS ARE PROVIDED BY:

Al & Leah Diercks in memory of their son Todd.

GENEROSITY SERVICE

A service celebrating God's generosity to us—especially in His generous salvation offered as a gift to us in Jesus Christ. May that generosity transform us.

Opening Hymn

Christ the Eternal Lord

LSB 829 sts. 1, 3-5



1 Christ the e - ter - nal Lord, Whose prom - ise here we claim,
3 Christ the re - deem - ing Son, Who shares our hu - man birth,
4 Christ the un - fad - ing Light Of ev - er - last - ing day,



Whose gifts of grace are free - ly poured On all who name Your name;
And by His death sal - va - tion won For ev - 'ry child of earth;
Our Morn - ing Star in splen - dor bright, The Life, the Truth, the Way;



With thank - ful - ness and praise We stand be - fore Your throne,
In - spire our hearts, we pray, To tell Your love a - broad,
That light of truth You give To ser - vants as to friends,



In - tent to serve You all our days And make Your glo - ry known.
That all may hon - or Christ to - day And fol - low Him as Lord.
Your way to walk, Your life to live, Till earth's brief jour - ney ends.

5 Christ the ascended King
Exalted high above,
Whose praise unending ages sing,
Whom yet unseen we love;

When mortal life is past
Your voice from heaven's throne
Shall call Your children home at last
To know as we are known.

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Invocation

P: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Generosity Praises

based on 1 Cor. 2:12; 2 Cor. 9:11; Prov. 11:25; Rom. 12:6,8; James 1:17

P: We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God,

C: that we may understand what God has freely given us.

P: You will be made rich in every way

C: so that you can be generous on every occasion.

P: A generous person will prosper;

C: The one who refreshes others will also be refreshed.

P: We have different gifts, according to the grace,
the gift of God, given to us. If it is encouraging,

C: let him encourage;

P: if it is contributing to the needs of others,

C: let him give generously;

P: if it is leadership,

C: let him lead diligently;

P: if it is showing mercy, **C: let him do it cheerfully.**

P: Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above,

C: coming down from the Father of lights. Amen.

Confession and Absolution (Forgiveness)

based on Titus 3:3-7

P: Confess—admit your sin before the Lord and before one another.

C: In our sinful condition, we were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

P: But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared,

C: He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done,

P: but because of his mercy.

C: He saved us through the washing of rebirth—

P: Your baptism into the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C: He saved us through the renewal by the Holy Spirit—

P: The Spirit He poured out on you generously through Jesus Christ our Savior,

C: So that, now we are made right in God's eyes,

P: You are justified by his grace, a free gift to you through God's generosity. You are forgiven, made right, justified in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen! Now we inherit all the riches of the kingdom of God as His children.

P: You inherit the gift of the hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

C: Thanks be to God! Amen.

Hymn of Praise

Christ the Eternal Lord

LSB 829, st. 1



1 Christ the e - ter - nal Lord, Whose prom - ise here we claim,
Whose gifts of grace are free - ly poured On all who name Your name;
With thank - ful - ness and praise We stand be - fore Your throne,
In - tent to serve You all our days And make Your glo - ry known.

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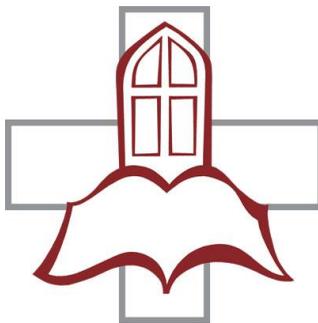
Greeting and Collect (Prayer of the Day)

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And also with you.*

P: O most Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, our God, worthy of all our love, in mercy You reconcile us poor sinners to be made holy in Your sight through Your Son, Jesus. Bring these same bright beams of Your divine grace to shine into the lives of our family, friends, and neighbors, opening them to change in their lives, so that they may also be fully reconciled to You, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: *Amen.*



Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 44:6–8 (ESV)

⁶Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:

“I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.

⁷Who is like me? Let him proclaim it.

Let him declare and set it before me,
since I appointed an ancient people.

Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen.

⁸Fear not, nor be afraid;

have I not told you from of old and declared it?

And you are my witnesses!

Is there a God besides me?

There is no Rock; I know not any.”

L: This is the Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Epistle (New Testament Letter)

Romans 8:18–27 (ESV)

¹⁸For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

²⁶Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

L: This is the Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Readings Song

Change My Heart, Oh God

Change my heart, oh God. ___ Make it ev - er true. ___

Change my heart, oh God. ___ May I be like You. ___

You are _ the pot - ter. I ___ am the clay.

Mold me _ and make ___ me. This is what I pray. ___

Change my heart, oh God. ___ Make it ev - er true. ___

Change my heart, oh God. ___ May I be like You. ___

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Holy Gospel

Matthew 21:23–32 (ESV)

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 21st chapter.

C: *Glory to You, O Lord.*

²³ When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?”

²⁴ Jesus answered them, “I also will ask you one question, and if you tell me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ The baptism of John, from where did it come? From heaven or from man?” And they discussed it among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ ²⁶ But if we say, ‘From man,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for they all hold that John was a prophet.” ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

²⁸“What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹And he answered, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he changed his mind and went. ³⁰And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.”

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord. C: *Praise to You, O Christ.*

Hymn of the Day

“Come, Follow Me,” the Savior Spake

LSB 688



1 “Come, fol - low Me,” the Sav - ior spake, “All in My
 2 “I am the light, I light the way, A god - ly
 3 “My heart a - bounds in low - li - ness, My soul with
 4 “I teach you how to shun and flee What harms your



way a - bid - ing; De - ny your - selves, the world for - sake,
 life dis - play - ing; I bid you walk as in the day;
 love is glow - ing; And gra - cious words My lips ex - press,
 soul’s sal - va - tion, Your heart from ev - ’ry guile to free,



O - bey My call and guid - ing. O bear the cross, what -
 I keep your feet from stray - ing. I am the way, and
 With meek - ness o - ver - flow - ing. My heart, My mind, My
 From sin and its temp - ta - tion. I am the ref - uge



e’er be - tide, Take My ex - am - ple for your guide.
 well I show How you must so - journ here be - low.
 strength, My all, To God I yield, on Him I call.
 of the soul And lead you to your heav’n - ly goal.”

5 Then let us follow Christ, our Lord,
 And take the cross appointed
 And, firmly clinging to His Word,

In suff’ring be undaunted.
 For those who bear the battle’s strain
 The crown of heav’nly life obtain.

Sermon

“From Closed to Open About Change in Their Lives”

Offering Preface

based on King David's prayer in 1 Chronicles 29:10-14

P: Praise be to you, O Lord, God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting.

C: **Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power
and the glory and the majesty and the splendor,
for everything in heaven and earth is yours.**

P: Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.

C: **Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things.**

P: In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all.

C: **Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name.**

P: But who are we that we should be able to give as generously as this?

C: **Everything comes from you,
and we have given you only what comes from your hand. Amen.**

Offering & Prayer Requests

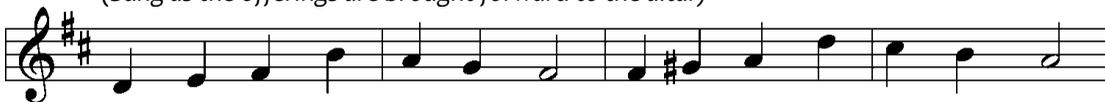
In addition to the prayer requests already received, Pastor will pause here to see if there are additional requests. Prayers can be thanksgivings, joy, requests for yourself, or requests for others.

Offertory

Take My Life and Let it Be

LSB 783 sts. 1, 4, 6

(Sung as the offerings are brought forward to the altar)



1 Take my life and let it be Con-se - crat - ed, Lord, to Thee;
4 Take my sil - ver and my gold, Not a mite would I with - hold;



Take my mo - ments and my days, Let them flow in cease-less praise.
Take my in - tel - lect and use Ev - 'ry pow'r as Thou shalt choose.

6 Take my love, my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store;
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

Prayers

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.

Confession of Faith

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.—And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.—I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Generosity Praises based on Psalm 106:1-5,47-48

P: Praise the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

C: his love endures forever.

P: Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the Lord or fully declare his praise?

C: Remember us, O Lord, when you show favor to your people, come to our aid when you save them,

P: that we may enjoy the prosperity of your chosen ones,
that we may share in the joy of your nation

C: So we may join your inheritance in giving praise.

P: Save us, O Lord our God,

C: and gather us from the nations,

P: So that we may give thanks to your holy name and glory in your praise.

C: Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting.

P: Let all the people say, "Amen! Praise the Lord."

C: Amen! Praise the Lord.

Benediction

P: The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
bless and preserve you.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn**On What Has Now Been Sown**

LSB 921



1 On what has now been sown Thy bless - ing, Lord, be - stow;
 2 To Thee our wants are known, From Thee are all our pow'rs;
 3 O grant that each of us, Now met be - fore Thee here,



The pow'r is Thine a - lone To make it sprout and grow. Do Thou
 Ac - cept what is Thine own And par - don what is ours. Our prais -
 May meet to - geth - er thus When Thou and Thine ap - pear And fol -



in grace the har - vest raise, And Thou a - lone shalt have the praise!
 es, Lord, and prayers re - ceive, And to Thy Word a bless - ing give.
 low Thee to heav'n, our home. E'en so, a - men, Lord Je - sus, come!

Announcements**Acknowledgements**

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