



STEWARDSHIP
IN ANXIOUS TIMES
OCTOBER 2026

WHAT IF WE
MAKE A MISTAKE?



reflection, repentance, &
REFORMATION

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

David and Bathsheba

REFORMATION SUNDAY & NEW MEMBER WELCOME

OCTOBER 25TH, 2026

8:30 AM & 10:30 AM

+ indicates to stand in body or spirit;

bold print indicates congregational responses

On Reformation Sunday, Lutherans honor the Holy Spirit's work among us renewing the church. As we welcome new members, we celebrate who we are together, how we change each other, and who we become together—the body of Christ, for the sake of the world. Activist Marry Harris “Mother” Jones once said, “Reformation, like education, is a journey, not a destination.” Today we commemorate the work done by Martin Luther and his colleagues and continue to engage our own reformation as people of God.

✠ GATHERING ✠

PRELUDE “A Mighty Fortress” arr. Timothy Albrecht
(8:30) “Down to the River to Pray” arr. Sandra Eithun

WORDS OF WELCOME

+ GATHERING AT THE FONT

Blessed be the Holy Trinity,
the one who fashions us, the one who heals us,
the one who reforms us again and again. **Amen.**

Paul's letter to the Romans changed Luther's understanding of his faith, freeing him from the endless and anxious effort of trying to prove his worth to God, and instead emphasizing God's love. Today, hear the connections between a key passage and the language of confession and absolution.

+ A READING FROM ROMANS (3:19-20) & CONFESSION

A reading from the 3rd chapter of Romans.

¹⁹Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰For “no human being will be justified in his sight” by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

Reflecting on this truth, we pray.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sins in the presence of God and of one another.

Gracious God,
**when we remember the freedom and love
you invite us to live in and with,
all of our defenses for what we have done,
all of our justifications for what we have left undone,
are silenced.**

Silence is kept for reflection.

**We confess that we have not allowed your grace to set us free.
We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We hear your word of love freely given to us,
yet we expect others to earn it.
We turn the church inward, rather than moving it outward.**

**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us.
Reform us to be a church powered by love,
willing to speak for what is right, act for what is just,
and seek the healing of your whole creation. Amen.**

+ A READING FROM ROMANS (3:21-25) & FORGIVENESS

The reading from Romans continues...

²¹But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed and is attested by the law and the prophets, ²²the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, ²³since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith.

Indeed, in the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and through faith, we are justified by the redemption he offers. God sends the Spirit to change us and to empower our lives in the world. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

+ GATHERING HYMN “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” ELW #505

+ 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

God of justice and mercy, even as we try to follow you, our mistakes are manifold - some minor; some causing major harm. By your Spirit, inspire us to speak and hear your truth. Give us the grace and strength for repentance, and where possible repair. Comfort and heal the injured. Bring all people into your forgiveness and new life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

*At this time, children age 3 to grade 5 are invited to go to Sunday School.
They will return to the sanctuary before communion.*

✠ WORD ✠

PSALM PSALM 51:1-9 "Be Merciful, O God" Ray Makeever



Be mer - ci - ful, O God, for we have sinned.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Have mercy on me, God, in your goodness;
in the greatness of your love
make me clean within.
Wash me from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin. <i>Refrain</i> | 3 O God, create in me a clean heart
and renew a steadfast spirit
deep within my being.
Cast me not away;
take not your spirit from me. <i>Refrain</i> |
| 2 For I confess to you my offenses;
and my sin is always there
keeping me from right.
Against you I have sinned,
done evil in your sight. <i>Refrain</i> | 4 Oh, give me back the joy of your
salvation,
and sustain a willing spirit
in me all my days.
Open now my lips;
I shall declare your praise. <i>Refrain</i> |

READING 2 SAMUEL 11:1-5, 26-27; 12:1-9

A reading from Second Samuel.

¹In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel with him; they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

²It happened, late one afternoon when David rose from his couch and was walking about on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; the woman was very beautiful. ³David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, "This is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite." ⁴So David sent messengers to get her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she was purifying herself after her period.) Then she returned to her house. ⁵The woman conceived, and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant."

...

²⁶When the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she made lamentation for him. ²⁷When the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son.

...

But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord, ¹and the Lord sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. ²The rich man had very many flocks and herds, ³but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb that he had bought. He brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children; it used to eat of his meager fare and drink from his cup and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him. ⁴Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was loath to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared that for the guest who had come to him." ⁵Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. He said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; ⁶he shall restore the lamb fourfold because he did this thing and because he had no pity."

⁷Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you from the hand of Saul; ⁸I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your bosom and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah, and if that had been too little, I would have added as much more. ⁹Why have you despised the word of the Lord, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.

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

HOMILY

+ HYMN OF THE DAY “Did Trouble Me” Susan Werner

1 When I closed my eyes so I would not see
my Lord did trouble me
When I let things stand that should not be
my Lord did trouble me
When I held my head too high too proud
my Lord did trouble me
When I raised my voice too little too loud
my Lord did trouble me *Refrain*

2 When I slept too long, slept too deep
my Lord did trouble me
Put a worrisome vision into my sleep
my Lord did trouble me
When I held myself away and apart
my Lord did trouble me
And the tears of my brother
didn't move my heart
my Lord did trouble me *Refrain*

3 And of this I'm sure, of this I know,
my Lord did trouble me
whatever I do and wherever I go,
my Lord did trouble me
in the whisper of the wind, in the rhythm of a song,
my Lord did trouble me
to keep me on the path where I belong
my Lord did trouble me *Refrain*

(after verse 3) Did Trou-ble Me with a word or a sign, with the
Will

ring-ing of the bell in the back of my mind. Did Trou-ble
Will

Me, did stir my soul for___ to
will

make me___ hu - man to make_ me___ whole.

WELCOME OF NEW MEMBERS (8:30)

New members are invited forward to affirm their baptismal promises.

Meta & Sybil Semmler-Smith

Teresa & Jerry Elsbernd

... Voices lift up how faith changes, how God's promises in baptism continue to hold us, how humans tend to trust in the world's power and ways of valuing and loving, and that while the church isn't perfect, God nevertheless works in and among us ...

Together with your siblings in Christ, I ask you to profess your faith in God and reject sin. We make these bold statements not because we are absolutely certain about these things, but because we are always becoming faithful to them and learning to wrestle with these claims about our relationship with God. We join our voices with our new members to remind us that we are all in this together.

The full assembly stands in body or spirit.

We invite you as new members to stand with us in defiance of the forces of sin and evil, trusting that the same Spirit who had the power to raise Jesus Christ from the dead is alive in you.

People of God, do you reject the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that pull us away from God? If so, say, “We do!” **We do!**

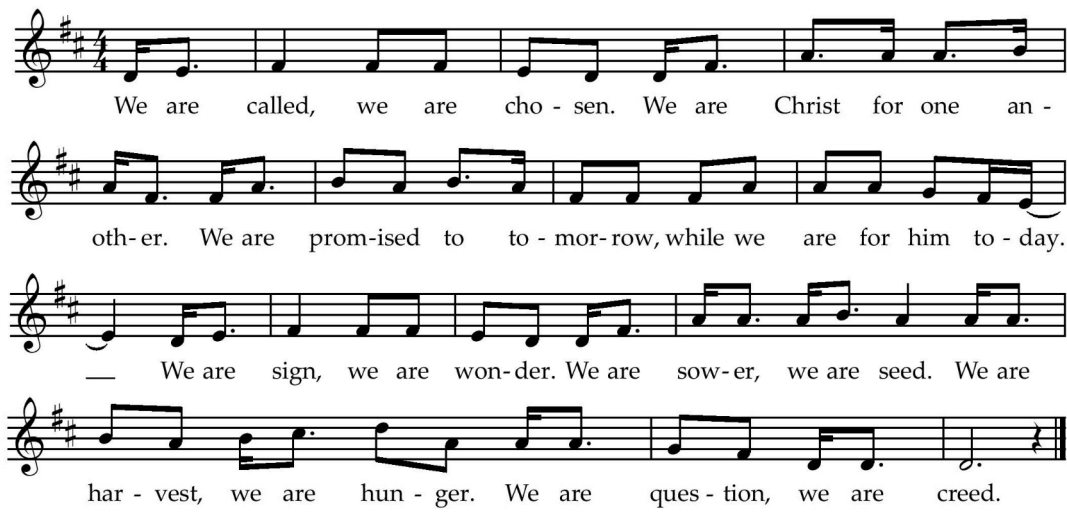
+ APOSTLES' CREED

**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.**

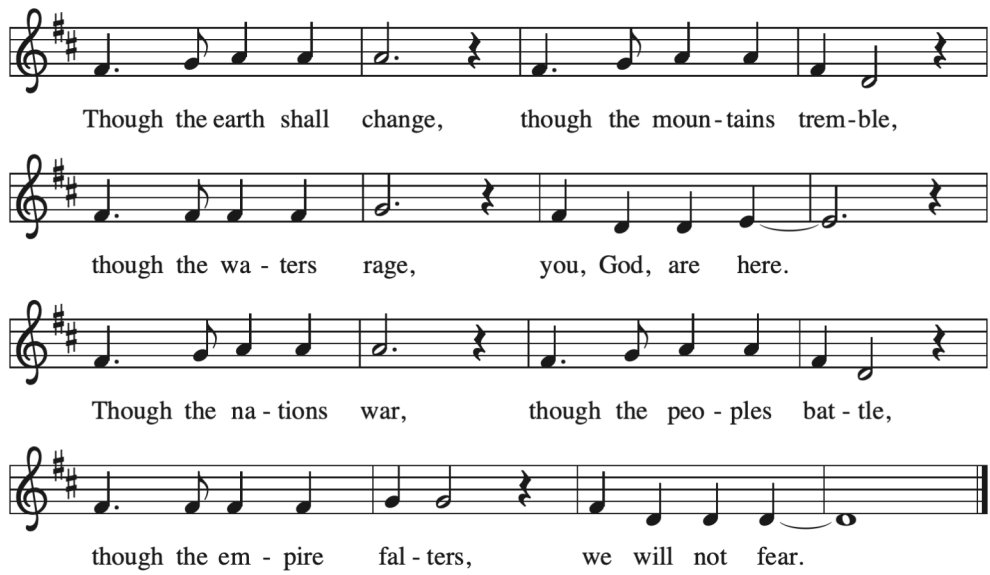
**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

+ HYMN OF CELEBRATION (8:30) “Anthem” Gather #778



PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE “Though the Earth Shall Change” ACS #1035

This refrain and “A Mighty Fortress” are both based on Psalm 46. A soloist will sing it once at the beginning of the prayers; the assembly is invited to join at the end of each petition:



+ SHARING OF THE PEACE

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

OFFERING



Guests

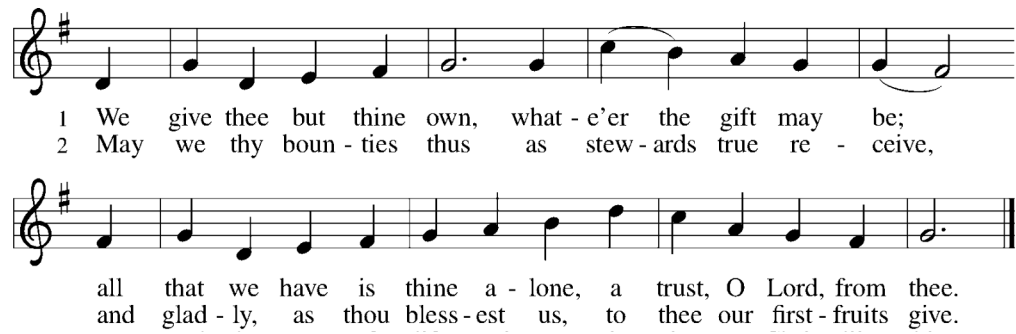


Members

Generosity is part of who we are as God’s people. Guests can use their QR code to give via Breeze, Bethel’s trusted online giving platform. Select “Member Faith Giving” to give to the general budget. Members can use their QR code to sign into Breeze to give a one-time gift or to schedule an automated donation. Online giving cards (at the name tag stations), checks, or cash may be placed in the offering plates as they are passed.

ANTHEM (8:30) “Change My Heart, O God/Lord Be Glorified” arr. John F. Wilson
(10:30) “How Firm a Foundation” arr. Richard Walters

+ OFFERTORY “We Give Thee but Thine Own” ELW #686 stanzas 1 & 2

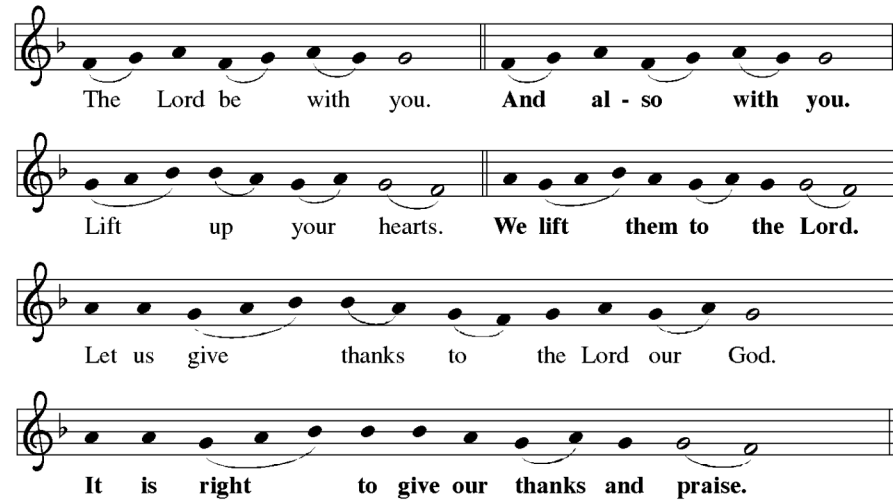


+ OFFERTORY PRAYER

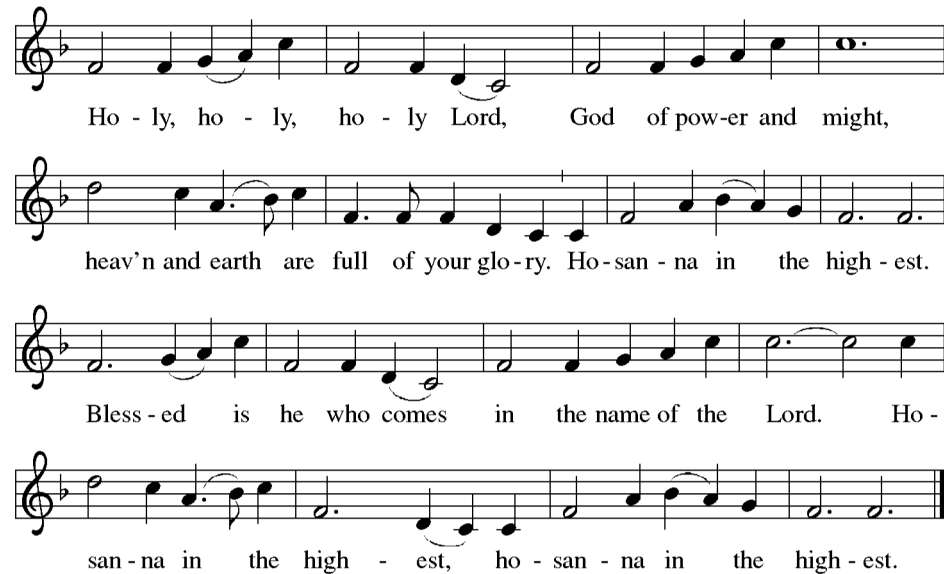
God of life, you are our provision.
In this season of harvest, we are reminded of your bounty.
From the tiny seed comes plenty; from the dirt enough for all.
In you, all gifts are given. In you, our need is met.
Trusting in you, we offer what has always been yours
and ask you to align our lives—including our outlook and our finances—in your way. Amen.

✠ MEAL ✠

+ GREAT THANKSGIVING



It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



+ EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

O God most mighty, O God most merciful, O God our rock and our salvation, hear our praise, call us to your table, and grant us your life. In all the "what ifs?" of life you fight for us; you give direction through your commandments; when we forget, you remind us; when we make a mistake, there is forgiveness even as we face consequences. In Christ, you meet all our "what ifs?" and walk with us.

The Words of Institution / Las Palabras de la Institución

Send your Spirit, that through this heavenly food, the body and blood of Christ, we become what we receive. **Amen.**

+ THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power, and the glory
are yours, now and forever. Amen.

+ EL PADRE NUESTRO

Padre nuestro que estás en los cielos
santificado sea tu nombre;
venga a nos tu reino;
hágase tu voluntad,
así en la tierra como en el cielo;
el pan nuestro de cada día, dánoslo hoy;
y perdónanos nuestras deudas
así como nosotros perdonamos
a nuestros deudores;
y no nos dejes caer en la tentación;
mas líbranos del mal.
Porque tuyo es el reino,
el poder y la gloria,
por los siglos de los siglos. Amén.

LAMB OF GOD



HOLY COMMUNION ANTHEM *"You Are Holy"* arr. Rick Seaton

+ TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

✠ SENDING ✠

+ BENEDICTION

God all mighty, God most merciful,
✠ bless you, keep you, and give you peace. **Amen.**

+ SENDING HYMN *"The Church's One Foundation"* ELW #654 stanzas 1, 3, & 4

+ DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news. **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE *"Little' Fugue in G Minor, BWV 578"* J. S. Bach



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