

**Sunday, September 13, 2020**  
**“God’s Work, Our Hands”**  
**Bethany Lutheran Church (ELCA)**

**RINGING OF BELL AND PRELUDE**

**WELCOME**

*Those gathered online are invited to respond with the bold printed words and sing the hymns.  
Those gathered in person are invited to quietly sing hymns and speak congregational responses.*

**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.**

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.**

**HYMN *To Be Your Presence***



1 To be your pres - ence is our mis - sion here, to show com -  
2 To be your pres - ence is our mis - sion bold, to feed the  
3 To be your pres - ence is our mis - sion blest, to speak for  
4 We are your heart, O Christ, your hands and voice, to serve your



pas - sion's face and lis - t'ning ear, to be your heart of mer - cy  
poor and shel - ter home - less cold, to be your hands of jus - tice,  
all the bro - ken and op - pressed, to be your voice of hope, your  
peo - ple is our call and choice, and in this mis - sion we, the



ev - er near,  
right up - hold, al - le - lu - ia!  
love ex - pressed,  
church, re - joice,

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939  
Music: ENGELBERG, Charles V. Stanford, 1852-1924  
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**WORD**

God speaks to us in scripture reading,  
preaching, and song.

**READING: Genesis 50:15-21**

*After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.*

A reading from Genesis.

<sup>15</sup>Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" <sup>16</sup>So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, <sup>17</sup>'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. <sup>18</sup>Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." <sup>19</sup>But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup>Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. <sup>21</sup>So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **PSALM 103:1-13**

*Psalm 103 is a hymn of praise that focuses on God's act of deliverance.*

<sup>1</sup>Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.  
<sup>2</sup>**Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and forget not all God's benefits—**  
<sup>3</sup>who forgives all your sins  
and heals all your diseases;  
<sup>4</sup>**who redeems your life from the grave  
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;**  
<sup>5</sup>who satisfies your desires with good things  
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.  
<sup>6</sup>**O LORD, you provide vindication  
and justice for all who are oppressed.**  
<sup>7</sup>You made known your ways to Moses  
and your works to the children of Israel.  
<sup>8</sup>**LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**  
<sup>9</sup>you will not always accuse us,  
nor will you keep your anger forever.  
<sup>10</sup>**You have not dealt with us according to our sins,  
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**  
<sup>11</sup>For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.  
<sup>12</sup>**As far as the east is from the west,  
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**  
<sup>13</sup>As a father has compassion for his children,  
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

### **READING: Romans 14:1-12**

*This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.*

A reading from Romans.

<sup>1</sup>Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. <sup>2</sup>Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. <sup>3</sup>Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has

welcomed them. <sup>4</sup>Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

<sup>5</sup>Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. <sup>6</sup>Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

<sup>7</sup>We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. <sup>8</sup>If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. <sup>9</sup>For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

<sup>10</sup>Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. <sup>11</sup>For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." <sup>12</sup>So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? Al - le -  
lu - ia. You have the words of e - ter - nal life.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

### GOSPEL READING: Matthew 18:21-35

*When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.*

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>21</sup>Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

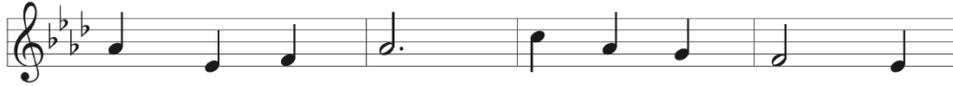
<sup>23</sup>"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; <sup>25</sup>and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup>So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' <sup>27</sup>And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' <sup>29</sup>Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' <sup>30</sup>But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup>Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked

slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' <sup>34</sup>And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup>So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

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

**MESSAGE**

**HYMN *God's Work, Our Hands.***



1 God's work, our hands: work - ing to - geth - er,  
 2 God's work, our feet: trav - 'ling to - geth - er,  
 3 God's work, our voice: sing - ing to - geth - er,  
 4 God is at work in and a - round us:



build - ing a fu - ture, re - pair - ing the world,  
 fol - low - ing Je - sus to plac - es un - known,  
 prais - ing, pro - claim - ing to all who will hear,  
 seed - lings are sprout - ing and bread's on the rise!



rais - ing up homes, plant - ing new gar - dens,  
 walk - ing as friends, march - ing for free - dom,  
 pray - ing for peace, shout - ing for jus - tice,  
 Washed and set free, hum - bled and hon - ored,



feed - ing the hun - gry and shelt - 'ring the cold.  
 run - ning the race with God's fu - ture the goal.  
 claim - ing God's love for the lost and the least.  
 gift - ed by grace, we re - spond in God's love.



Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,  
 Bless, God, our feet as we fol - low your way,  
 Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,  
 Bless, God, our lives as we an - swer your call,



shar - ing the good news of your Gos - pel.

Text: Wayne L. Wold  
 Music: EARTH AND ALL STARS, David N. Johnson  
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## **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 INTERCESSION**

With open hands and open hearts, let us pray for the needs of all the world.

*Each petition ends with, "God of abundant grace." Those worshipping respond with, "**Open your healing hands.**"*

We commend these and all things to your gracious care, trusting in Christ Jesus, our Savior.  
**Amen.**

## **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*During this time, an offering would normally be taken for the mission of Christ's church. We are grateful for your gifts and they are needed to continue the work of the church. We understand in this time some have lost their jobs, hours reduced and may be incurring a financial hardship and therefore unable to financially give; while others may be able to give more. Options on ways to give are found on our website ([www.wbbethany.org](http://www.wbbethany.org)). Thank you!*

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

**Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with the gifts of ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

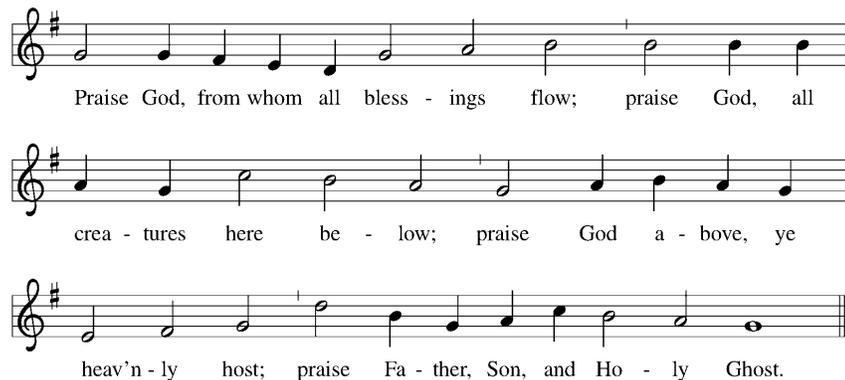
**Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,**

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.

### BLESSING

The God of compassion, hope and joy,  
Our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,  
Bless your feet to carry you into places of need.  
Bless your lips to proclaim love and mercy.  
Bless your heart to love and listen to those you encounter.  
Bless your hands to care for the needs of your neighbors.  
Bless you to be a blessing to others.  
Now and always.  
Amen.

### HYMN *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise God, all  
crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye  
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711, alt.  
Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

### SENDING

Whether gathered in this place or in your home, go in peace and share the good news.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### POSTLUDE



Thank you for worshipping with us this morning! We invite you to join us again next Sunday at 9:30 AM on Facebook or outdoors (weather dependent). Blessings to you as you shine forth the light of Christ in the world this week! Thanks, and praise to God for everything you do in the name of Jesus Christ!

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Scripture passage from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

## “God’s Work. Our Hands” Sunday

Dear members of Bethany,

God’s Work, Our Hands began early this year with the storm that blew through on August 10<sup>th</sup>. Many of you helped neighbors and friends in cleanup efforts and this truly was in the spirit of this designated Sunday of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Due to COVID restrictions, we can’t do “God’s Work. Our Hands” Sunday as a group, like usual. But there still are needs in our community and we have come up with some ideas to make this a memorable day of service. If you have a yellow shirt, wear it that day.

◇ If you have helped a neighbor haul branches, fix fence, or something like that, take a picture and send it to Paula and we will put on Bethany’s Facebook page. If you will be doing a project, please do the same.

◇ Gardeners: The church grounds have continuing needs like deadheading flowers, pulling weeds, and general cleanup. If other people are helping at the same time, keep a safe distance or wear a mask.

◇ A “Not a Christmas” Angel Tree: Select something from the list of needs to help school kids or DVIP (Domestic Violence Intervention Program). Bring items to the church and we will deliver them to WBCSD and DVIP. The list of needed items is at the bottom of this page. If you would rather give money, we will use it to purchase needed items.

We have much to be thankful for and giving back to our community is how God would want us to respond.

### DVIP needs list:

- Gift cards for groceries/household items
- Cooking Oil
- Baby formula
- Diapers size 5/6
- Sugar
- Microwave popcorn
- Body Wash
- Women’s underwear sizes 5, 6, and 8
  - New and prepackaged

### School Needs List:

- Boys underwear sizes 4-6
  - \* New and prepackaged
- Girls underwear sizes 4-6
  - \* New and prepackaged
- New black sweatpants sizes 4-6
  - \* Girls and boys
- New gray sweatpants sizes 4-6
  - \* Girls and boys

Please contact Al Beyer with any questions. Thank you!



**God’s work.**  
Our hands.