

THE CHURCH
God ~~WE~~ **WANT** *s*

A CHURCH FOR ALL PEOPLE

The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | York, Nebraska

August 20, 2023

SERIES THEME: THE CHURCH GOD WANTS

"I want a church that..." How would you complete that statement? Would you focus on size—big or small? Would you think more about style—formal versus laid back? Is it certain desired church programs that come to mind? What exactly do you want in a church? In this worship series, we see that that is not the right question. Scripture says Jesus bought the Church with his blood. So, the right question then becomes: what does God want in a church? You might find a church that runs all the youth programs you want or has a vibe that you enjoy or is in your ideal location. But if that church is not doing what Christ wants it do, then it really is not a spiritually healthy place to be. So, let us think about the church God wants. What does it look like? What are its priorities? What does it all do?

THEME OF THE DAY: A CHURCH FOR ALL PEOPLE

"All are welcome!" Is that true at our church? Historically, it rarely is true. In the gospels, the average Jewish person would have thought it odd, even offensive, if someone who wasn't an Israelite walked into their place of worship. Taking it a step further, some of the Jewish religious leaders would imply that church was meant for those who zealously followed religious customs and traditions. Those were "good church folk." So church was meant for people of the right heritage and who behaved the right way. What about us? Is it conceivable that a stranger could walk into our church and for some reason you would ask yourself, "What is someone like that doing here?" Or, just perhaps, you are asking that question about yourself? "There are some seemingly godly people here. I'm not like them. Do I really belong?" Today, Jesus shows us that God wants church to be for all people. All of us—regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, or social status—have the same problem of sin. And we all have the same Savior. Therefore, anyone who comes to Christ's Church and cries out, "Lord, have mercy!" is more than welcome.

Worship Leader
Organist/Pianist

Pastor Justin Wilkens
Timothy Richert

Acknowledgments

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The Service, Setting Three (page 188 in Christian Worship 21)

Hymn: 914 Christ Is Our Cornerstone

Stand

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

Amen.

Confession

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

CW 213

Hear my voice when I call, O Lord; be merciful and answer me.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory Be to God on High

CW 157



Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor - ship you, we glorify you,



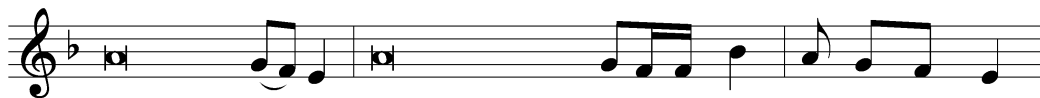
we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther Al - mighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world;



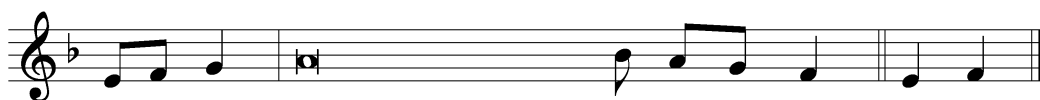
have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; re-ceive our prayer.



You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us.



For you on-ly are holy; you on-ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the



Ho - ly Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

THE WORD

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Gracious God, in Christ you bring people from near and far into the fellowship of your church. Open our eyes to your saving plan, and move us to embrace all who seek your salvation so that we may rejoice together at the banquet of your love; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Isaiah 56:1,6–8

Through Isaiah the Lord told the world that all God-fearing people would have a place in the house of his church.

Salvation for Others

¹This is what the Lord says.

Protect justice, and carry out righteousness,
because my salvation is coming very soon.

My righteousness is ready to be revealed.

⁶Then the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord,

to minister to him and to love the name of the Lord

and to become his servants,

every one of them who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it,

those who take hold of my covenant—

⁷I will bring them to my holy mountain,

and I will make them glad in my house of prayer.

Their whole burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be

acceptable on my altar.

For my house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples

of the world.

⁸This is the declaration of God the Lord,
who gathers Israel's dispersed people:
"I will gather still more people to my house besides
the ones already gathered."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day: 67: In front of hymnal- Let the Peoples Praise You

Second Reading

Ephesians 2:13–22

Christ takes foreigners and strangers and, upon the foundation of God's Word, builds them into a holy temple-his church.

¹³But now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our peace. He made the two groups one by destroying the wall of hostility that divided them ¹⁵when he abolished the law of commandments and regulations in his flesh. He did this to create in himself one new person out of the two, in this way making peace. ¹⁶And he did this to reconcile both to God in one body through the cross by putting the hostility to death on it. ¹⁷He also came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. ¹⁹So then, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of God's household. ²⁰You have been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the Cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole building is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you too are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

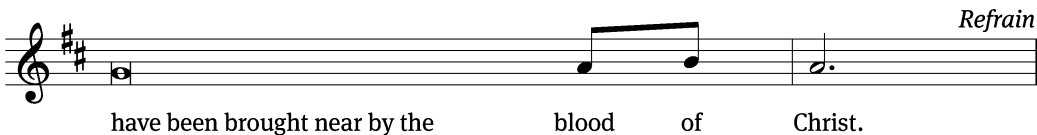
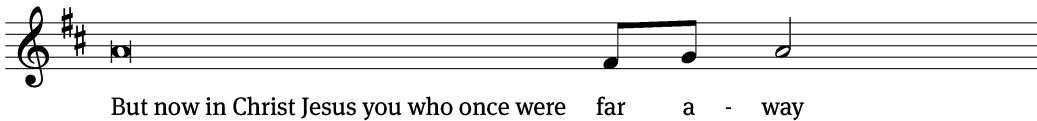
Ephesians 2:13



Refrain



Tone



Refrain

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Gospel

Matthew 15:21–28

In the face of Jesus' test a Canaanite woman demonstrates great faith, proving that God's church is meant for all people.

²¹ Jesus left that place and withdrew into the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²² There a Canaanite woman from that territory came and kept crying out, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! A demon is severely tormenting my daughter!"

²³ But he did not answer her a word.

His disciples came and pleaded, "Send her away, because she keeps crying out after us."

²⁴ He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

²⁵ But she came and knelt in front of him, saying, "Lord, help me."

²⁶ He answered her, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to their little dogs."

²⁷ "Yes, Lord," she said, "yet their little dogs also eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, your faith is great! It will be done for you, just as you desire." And her daughter was healed at that very hour.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Hymn of the Day: 855 The Church's One Foundation

sts. 1–5

Sermon: Matthew 15:21-28

Stand

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From there 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.**

Be seated

Installation of Council Members

St. Paul wrote: "Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully."

The minister says to those being installed:

(Name), you have been *elected* to use your gifts in special service in the Lord's kingdom as [*elected position*].

I now ask you all in the presence of God and this assembly:

Will you carry out your responsibilities faithfully to the glory of Christ and in service to his church?

If so, answer: I will, and I ask God to help me.

I will, and I ask God to help me.

The minister says to the assembly:

Will you, *brothers and sisters*, support and pray for them in this work? If so, answer: We will, and we ask God to help us.

We will, and we ask God to help us.

The minister addresses those being installed:

I install you (name) as [*elected position*] in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray.

Gracious Father, you call your people to service and give them various tasks in the world and in your church. Send down on *these workers* your Holy Spirit, the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord. Grant grace and strength, that *they* may serve you faithfully to the glory of your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The minister addresses those newly installed:

Go, then, and take up the work to which you have been elected. May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

Loving God and Lord, you created the universe that surrounds us and the globe on which we live. You control all things through your Son, who sits at your right hand in glory.

Comfort us with the promise of your eternal presence.

Give your Word power as it works in our hearts and minds. Clear away our confusion, and demolish our doubts. Send your Spirit to strengthen both our confidence in your promises and our desire to live according to your will.

Take away our love of sinning, and restore us each day by your grace.

The signs of the times warn us that the end of time is near. Protect us from scoffers who sneer at your truth. Spare us and Christians around the world from all forms of hate and persecution.

Give us courage to carry the cross with patience and joy.

Instill in the hearts of our children a desire to follow you as they prepare for future days. Help them distinguish between what is passing and what is eternal, between instant thrills and lasting joy. Encourage more young people to prepare for service in the public ministry of the gospel.

Mold us and move us to be good examples for our youth.

Hold in your care, Lord, those who are experiencing physical or emotional pain and all who are afflicted by disease or facing death. [Especially bless . . . *here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Pour out your compassion on the grieving, and comfort the mourners who miss someone they loved.

Move us to pray for these brothers and sisters and to help when we can.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

Whether we pray together or alone, you have promised to hear and answer us. Give us patience to accept your blessings in whatever way you send them. In your love and wisdom, prepare us for the day when you will take us to be with you forever.

Hear us for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Offering

Offering Hymn: 768 Lord of All Nations, Grant Me Grace

sts. 1–2

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.**

Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

Amen.

Hymn: 860 In Christ There Is No East or West

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: 10:30 AM Worship

Sunday: 10:30 AM Worship and Communion

Council Meeting August 20th

Bethel will have its next council meeting following our worship service this morning.

NELHS Request

NELHS has the opportunity to welcome six international students, but are in need of host families to house the students. If you would be willing to serve as a host family, please contact Pastor Andrew Frey (afrey@nelhs.org) or Mandy Wellman (mwellman@nelhs.org).

CONNECTION CARDS: Visitors or members with changes in contact information, please fill out a connection card online at www.bethelyork.com on the member connect tab or scan this code.



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Personal assisted listening devices are available.

Given to the Lord: Attendance: Worship 50, Offerings: Operating: Needed 2,920.37, Given \$1,360.25. **To God be the glory!**

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