

**THE CHURCH**  
*God* ~~WE~~ **WANTS**

**A CHURCH THAT REALLY KNOWS JESUS**

The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

# **BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH** | York, Nebraska

*August 27, 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 THAT REALLY KNOWS JESUS**

Jesus asked, "Who do you say that I am?" Make no mistake. That is the most important question in the world. And it is a question every human must answer. A complimentary answer can still be dead wrong. Some in Jesus' day thought he was John the Baptist or the prophet Elijah come back from the dead. Complimentary, but dead wrong. Today plenty of people believe Jesus existed. They believe he was a wise teacher or a role model for love. Complimentary, but dead wrong if missing the main point. Jesus is both Lord and Savior, the Messiah, the Son of the living God. This truth is the core of saving faith. It is the central message God has called our church to proclaim. What does God want in a church? He wants a church that really knows Jesus.

**Worship Leader**  
**Organist/Pianist**

Pastor Justin Wilkens

## **Acknowledgments**

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

**Hymn: 869 Onward, Christian Soldiers**

*sts. 1–2*

*Stand*

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

**Amen.**

### **Confession**

*CW 188*

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,



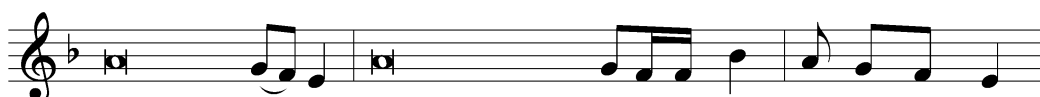
we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



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;



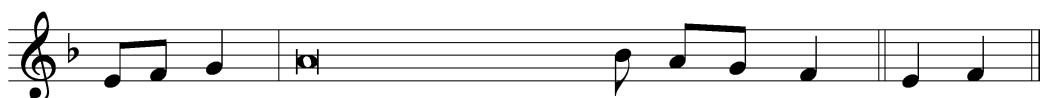
have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; re-ceive our prayer.



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.

Almighty God, whom to know is everlasting life, grant us to know your Son, Jesus, to be the way, the truth, and the life that we may boldly confess him to be the Christ and steadfastly walk in the way that leads to life eternal; 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**

*Exodus 34:5–9*

*God proclaimed to Moses what he was like. Likewise, the Church's job is to proclaim to the world who Christ is and what he is like.*

<sup>5</sup>The Lord came down in the cloud. He took his stand there with Moses and proclaimed the name of the Lord. <sup>6</sup>The Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed: "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, and overflowing with mercy and truth, <sup>7</sup>maintaining mercy for thousands, forgiving guilt and rebellion and sin. He will by no means clear the guilty. He calls their children and their children's children to account for the guilt of the fathers, even to the third and the fourth generation."

<sup>8</sup>Moses quickly bowed to the ground and worshipped. <sup>9</sup>He said, "If I have now found favor in your sight, Lord, please let the Lord go along with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, pardon our guilt and our sin, and accept us as your possession."

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Second Reading

Romans 10:5–13

*St. Paul teaches that those who know in their heart that Jesus is both Lord and Savior will be saved.*

<sup>5</sup> Indeed, Moses writes this about the righteousness that comes by the law: “The one who does these things will live by them.” <sup>6</sup> But the righteousness that comes by faith speaks like this: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) <sup>7</sup> “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). <sup>8</sup> But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith that we are proclaiming. <sup>9</sup> Certainly, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For it is with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and it is with the mouth that a person confesses, resulting in salvation. <sup>11</sup> For Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” <sup>12</sup> So there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, because the same Lord is Lord of all, who gives generously to all who call on him. <sup>13</sup> Yes, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

## Gospel Acclamation

John 6:68



*Refrain*



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

*Tone*



Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

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## **Gospel**

*Matthew 16:13–20*

*The truth upon which God builds his church is this: Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God.*

### **Peter Declares That Jesus Is the Messiah**

<sup>13</sup> When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

<sup>14</sup> They said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

<sup>15</sup> He said to them, “But you, who do you say that I am?”

<sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

<sup>17</sup> Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. <sup>18</sup> And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not overpower it. <sup>19</sup> I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” <sup>20</sup> Then he commanded the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

*Be seated*

### **Hymn of the Day: 510 In Christ Alone**

**Sermon:** *Exodus 34:5-9*

*Stand*

### **Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is,  
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,**

**God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.**

**He suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.**

**He ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,**

**the Lord, the giver of life,**

**who proceeds from the Father and the Son,**

**who in unity with the Father and the Son**

**is worshiped and glorified,**

**who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead**

**and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*Be seated*

## **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: 899 Lord Jesus Christ, Our Savior-King**

*sts. 1–2*

## **THE SACRAMENT**

*Stand*

### **Preface**

*CW 199*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock until he comes again in glory. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

### Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 200



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of hosts,



heav - en and earth are full, full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.



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### Prayer of Thanksgiving

Blessed are you, Lord God, eternal King and gracious Father. In love you made us the crown of your creation. In mercy you planned our salvation. In grace you sent your Son to redeem us from sin.

We remember and give you thanks that your eternal Son, Jesus Christ, became flesh and made his dwelling among us, that he willingly placed himself under law to redeem those under law, that he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death on a cross, that he has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Bless us as we receive your Son's body and blood in this Sacrament. Forgive our sins, increase our faith, strengthen our fellowship, and deepen our longing for the day when Christ will welcome us to his eternal feast. Praise and thanks and honor and glory be to you, O God our Father, and to your Son and to the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### 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.**

### **Words of Institution**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my + body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my + blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**Amen.**

### **Lamb of God**

*CW 202*

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer - cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer - cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
world; grant us, grant us peace.

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*Be seated*

## Distribution

**Close Communion** *We ask that only those who have previously spoken to our pastor or are members in good standing of this or another WELS or ELS congregation come to Holy Communion today. Our practice of Close Communion (which has been the practice of the Christian Church throughout the ages) is in no way trying to judge anyone's faith. What we are trying to do is follow the Bible's clear teaching (1 Corinthians 11) to first study God's Word together. As we do so, we can share with/review with you what the Lord's Supper is all about. You, then, also have an opportunity to examine what we believe and teach before you come to the Lord's Supper and make a public profession that you agree with what we teach.*

## Distribution Hymn: 677 The Death of Jesus Christ, Our Lord

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
**his mercy endures forever.**

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
**we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

O God the Father, source of all goodness, in your loving-kindness you sent your Son to share our humanity. We thank you that through him you have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament. We also pray that you will not forsake us but will rule our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit so that we willingly serve you day after day; 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: 607 Ten Thousand Reasons**



## **NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Today:** 10:30 AM Worship and Communion

**Sunday:** 10:30 AM Worship

**CONNECTION CARDS:** Visitors or members with changes in contact information, please fill out a connection card online at [www.bethelyork.com](http://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 54, Offerings: Operating: Needed 2,920.37, Given \$2,115.25. **To God be the glory!**

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