

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

March 22, 2026



Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

BONNIE FAUST, GUEST LAY PREACHER

PEGGY TERHUNE, S.A.M., MINISTER

Cathy Williams, Organist

355 East Ridge Road Salisbury NC 28144

Phone: 704-636-0331

CHURCH WEBSITE

Bethelsalisbury.org

WIFI Bethel Guest

password **Lutheran**

ENTER TO WORSHIP – LEAVE TO SERVE

“Setting Ten”

**Congregation Stands*

Congregation responses are in bold

WELCOME

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude “Ah Holy Jesus” arr. by Young

CALL TO WORSHIP Welcome to the weary and the worn.
Welcome to the wiggly and the eager.
Welcome to the skeptical and the seeking.
Welcome to the early risers and those still trying to wake up.
Welcome to the rule followers and the rule breakers.
Welcome to those hungry for justice and those desperate for mercy.
Welcome to the sinners and the saints.
This is God’s house.
You can make yourself at home here.
Let us worship our just, merciful, and faithful God!

CALL TO CONFESSION Jesus once said to a crowd, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone.”

Friends, none of us are without sin.
None of us get it right all the time.
None of us can get by without God’s grace.

In the Prayer of Confession, we acknowledge this truth.
We put down our stones
and we turn to God for forgiveness.

Join me in this act of transformation. Let us pray:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION Holy God,
we love to live our lives by the rules.
We love clear answers.
We love right and wrong.
We love swift justice.
We love to pick up stones,
but you show us another way.
You welcome shades of gray and nuanced conversation.
You prioritize mercy over legality.
You prioritize people over tradition.
You prioritize love over everything.
Forgive us for losing sight of what truly matters.
Forgive us for clinging tighter to laws than to each other or to you.
Forgive us. Soften our hearts.
Root us in mercy, justice, and love.
With hope for a better tomorrow, we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS Church family,
Jesus saw a crowd ready to throw stones and invited them to choose another way.
Jesus offered them grace, mercy, and compassion,
and the same can be said for us.
So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:
Our God is a God of mercy.
Our God is a God of compassion.
Our God is a God of grace.
We are forgiven, loved, and invited to choose another way.
Thanks be to God for yet another second chance.
Amen.

*Gathering Hymn

“Lord Whose Love in Humble Service”

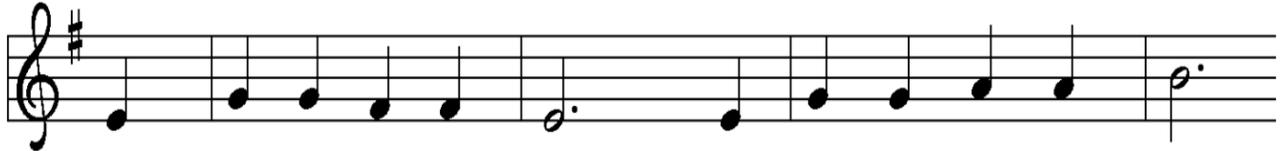
ELW # 712

intro by Callahan

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.**

* Kyrie



1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.

2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.

3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.

Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.

Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

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*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, your Son came into the world to free us all from sin and death. Breathe upon us the power of your Spirit, that we may be raised to new life in Christ and serve you in righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The congregation is seated.

THE WORD

First Reading

Ezekiel 37:1-14

A reading from the thirty seventh chapter of Ezekiel

¹ The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ² He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³ He said to me, “Mortal, can these bones live?” I answered, “O Lord GOD, you know.” ⁴ Then he said to me, “Prophecy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. ⁵ Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶ I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD.”

⁷ So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸ I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. ⁹ Then he said to me, “Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” ¹⁰ I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

¹¹ Then he said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’ ¹² Therefore prophecy and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³ And you shall know that I am the LORD when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴ I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 130 *congregation will read responsively*

¹ Out [|] of the depth I cry to [|] you, O LORD;

² **O LORD, [|] hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my [|] supplication.**

³ If you were to keep watch [|] over sins, O LORD, [|] who could stand?

⁴ **Yet with you [|] is forgiveness, in order that you [|] may be feared.**

⁵ I wait for you, O LORD; [|] my soul waits; in your word [|] is my hope.

⁶ **My soul waits for the Lord more than those who keep watch [|] for the morning, more than those who keep watch [|] for the morning.**

⁷ O Israel, wait for the LORD, for with the LORD there is [|] steadfast love; with the LORD there is plen- [|] teous redemption.

⁸ **For the LORD shall [|] redeem Israel from [|] all their sins.**

Second Reading

Romans 8:6-11

A reading from the sixth chapter of Romans

⁶ To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed, it cannot, ⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

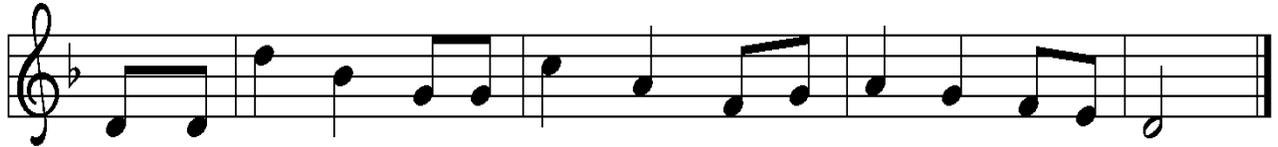
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind -



slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy One, when you speak, we don't want to miss it.

When you bend down and write in the dirt,

when you move through the trees,

when you wake with the dawn,

when you tug on our heart,

or whisper into our dreams,

we don't want to miss it.

So today we pray, clear out the cobwebs in our ears.

Quiet the steady stream of thoughts marching through our minds.

Open up space in our hearts so that we can receive your word for us today.

With hope we pray. **Amen.**

*Holy Gospel

The holy gospel according to John & Matthew

John 8:2-11

Glory to you, O Lord.

² Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and began to teach them. ³ The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and, making her stand before all of them, ⁴ they said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. ⁵ Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" ⁶ They said this to test him, so that they might

have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. ⁷ When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” ⁸ And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. ⁹ When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. ¹⁰ Jesus straightened up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” ¹¹ She said, “No one, sir.”^[a] And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.”^[b]

Matthew 23:23

²³ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Children's Sermon

Kara Thurston

Sermon

Bonnie Faust, Guest Lay Preacher

*Hymn of the Day

“Let Us Remember” ADELAIDE 5.4.5.4 D (“Have Thine Own Way”)

What is important? What matters more?
Human connection or keeping score?
In our pursuit of justice and truth
Let us remember: we fall short, too

We’ve been shown mercy all of our lives
By the creator of humankind
So when we’re in a position to judge
Let us remember: they’re just like us

Following Jesus, living in truth
We remain faithful to our roots
When those roots lead us outside the lines
Let us remember: faith is alive

What does the Lord require of us?
To remain humble, loving, and just
Keeping the heart of the gospel in mind
Let us remember: do what is right

***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 THE PEOPLE**

Loving God,
you know all of us.

You know our fears and our dreams,
our hopes and our longings,
our grief and our joy.

You know the words that are on our tongue before we can even say them,
so today we come to you unfiltered.

Today, we bring you our full honesty,
trusting that you meet us here with grace and love.

God of Good News **Hear our prayer**

Holy God, we admit that mercy, justice, and faithfulness often get tangled up in
our minds.

We want to do the right thing, which feels like justice. However, sometimes
we go about justice with a blunt sword, failing to practice mercy.

We want to be merciful, but our anger and hurt can get in the way. Too often,

we find ourselves casting stones. God of Good News **Hear our prayer**

We want to be righteous, but we often forget that righteousness must impact our relationships, not only our words or our actions.

God, we admit that mercy, justice, and faithfulness often get tangled up in our minds. So like Jesus did with the crowds that day, help us to root ourselves in the best of these practices. Untangle these threads of our faith and show us how to hold them all.

Spark a fire in our hearts for justice—
justice for the oppressed,
justice for the overlooked,
justice for our neighbors,
justice for those not given a voice.

Spark a fire in our hearts for mercy—
mercy for the sinful, which is all of us,
mercy for the hurt,
mercy for the ones who are doing their best with what they have.

And spark a fire in our hearts for righteousness.
Call us up to a higher moral ground.
Remind us that our faith invites us to love as you love,
and to forgive as you forgive.

Show us how to put down our stones.
Show us how to forgive ourselves for our own wrong.
Show us how to empathize with the other, putting ourselves in their shoes.
God of Good News **Hear our prayer**

If we can do that, then maybe there will be a day when there is less stone throwing, less mob building, less violence toward our neighbor. Maybe there will be a day when all can gather at the table. Maybe there will be a day when we can all break bread together. Maybe there will be a day when justice, mercy, and righteousness feel like a mighty flowing stream.

God of Good News **Hear our prayer**

Until that day, we will continue to look for your words in the dirt.
We will continue to listen for your deep truth.
Until that promised day, we will continue to bring you our unfiltered honesty.
Until that promised day, we will continue to pray for our neighbor.
Today, we pray for. . .

God of Good News

Hear our prayer

Loving God, set a fire in our hearts for justice, mercy, and righteousness. And as you do, we will join our voices together to pray the words your son taught us to pray, saying. . . **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**

THE PEACE IS SHARED

The Peace of Christ be with you always **and also with you.**

*Christian Fellowship is one of the most blessed gifts given to us by our God.
Please take a moment to greet those around you and extend to them the peace of Christ.
The congregation is seated.*

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM “Jesus is a Rock in a Weary Land” ELW #333



Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right spir -
 it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take
 not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re-store to me the
 joy of your sal-va - tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir - it.

***OFFERING** O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

***SENDING HYMN** "You are the Way" Intro by Lang ELW #758

***BLESSING** Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, † bless you now and always. **Amen.**

***DISMISSAL** When you meet anger, speak with love. When you meet fear, speak with hope. When you meet pain, speak with gentleness. But no matter what, speak this good news. For the good new of the gospel is love and justice

for all. It is joy that surprises, and nonviolence that transforms. The good news of the gospel is alive in the world, so go forth speak. For if you won't, then who will. **I will, and I ask God to help me.**

***POSTLUDE**

*Our worship service has ended.
Our worship thru service begins.*

The Good News is.....

**Rooted in justice,
mercy, and
Faithfulness**

HOMEBOUND/HOSPITAL/NURSING HOME

Betty Shuping	Home of Daughter, 336-513-4035
Katrina Kurfees	Home of Daughter
Linda Plummer	Trinity Oaks Health & Rehab., Memory Unit
Peggy Swicegood	Continue prayers
Brenda Dwigins	Continue prayers
Carolyn Hicks	Continue prayers
Marcia Miller	Continue prayers
Elaine Stiller	Continue prayers
Eric & Dawn Leach	Continue prayers
Danny Norman	Continue prayers (brother of Ellen Webb)
Robert & Gathel Meachem	Brookdale, Room 34, 2201 Statesville Blvd.
Cody McDowell	Continue prayers
Wayne Chaffin	Recovering at his home
Eddie Rabon	NH Presbyterial Hospital

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome everyone to Bethel Lutheran Church. We are glad you have joined us for worship and bid a special welcome to guests in our midst. May you find peace, comfort, strength, and hope as our Lord comes to us in his word. Please take a moment to register your attendance by signing your name on the fellowship pad as it is passed in each pew.

Please welcome Bonnie Faust with us today. Bonnie is our guest lay preacher filling in for Peggy. Thank you, Bonnie for bringing God's message to us today during this Lent season.

Bethel's 175th Anniversary – Today is Voting Day! The anniversary committee is looking for the perfect **phrase, slogan, or short verse** to serve as our anniversary theme. This theme will also appear on a t shirt, so please keep submissions brief, memorable, and faith centered. Vote for your favorite theme today and the theme results will be revealed on Palm Sunday.

Laura's Children's Closet will be open on Saturday, March 28th, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

As is our tradition, we will decorate the sanctuary on Easter Sunday with lilies. The last Sunday to reserve a plant is Palm Sunday, March 29th. If you need additional forms, they can be found on the narthex table.

Keep watch out in your yards and flower beds! Another Easter tradition we enjoy here at Bethel is decorating a cross with flowers, azaleas, dogwood, and most anything blooming in our yards. These may be brought on Sunday morning and the cross will be assembled. More specific details to come next Sunday.

The Missions and Outreach Committee will meet on Saturday morning, March 28th at 8:30 a.m.

Thank you all for your continued supplies of food for the Blessing Box. It is amazing how this box is being used in the community. Please continue with your contributions. Our new box has been installed, take a look; it's much bigger and beautiful! The black cart in the narthex is only for RHM food donations, NOT blessing box.

Sunrise Worship Service with Holy Communion will be Easter Morning at 7:00 a.m. with a delicious breakfast prepared by the LMIM immediately following. There will be no Sunday School and worship service with Holy Communion will begin at 10:00 a.m. Come, all are invited to worship.

Looking forward to April ...We are pleased to announce that several new members will be joining our church family on April 12. Please join us in warmly welcoming them as they take this important step in their faith journey.

WELCA project for April 1 – April 26 we are collecting snacks for Novant's family surgical waiting rooms. Designated boxes are in the narthex. Items needed are Lance crackers & cookies, Nature Valley granola bars, Nutrigrain bars, etc. **Sunday, April 26th,** we will need volunteers to meet after church to put labels with Bethel's address and a Bible verse on each snack.



This QR code is created to be a quick link to the bethelsalisbury.org website

Be sure to check your mailbox

Fifth Sunday in Lent

TODAY	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School
	9:45 a.m.	Choir Practice
	10:30 a.m.	Worship
WEDNESDAY	1:00-2:30 p.m.	Bible Study in Fellowship Hall
	7:00-8:30 a.m.	Bible Study ZOOM
THURSDAY	9:30 a.m.	Joy Ringers practice
SATURDAY	8:30 a.m.	Missions and Outreach group meeting
	9:30 a.m.	Passion Reading Practice
	10:00 – 12:00 p.m.	Laura’s Closet will be open

Palm/ Passion Sunday March 29th

NEXT SUNDAY	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School
	9:45 a.m.	Choir practice
	10:30 a.m.	Worship
WEDNESDAY	1:00-2-30 a.m.	Bible Study in Fellowship Hall
	7:00-8:30 a.m.	Bible Study ZOOM
THURSDAY	7:00 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Worship/Holy Communion
FRIDAY	7:00 p.m.	Good Friday Worship

Attendance/Contribution Information for 3/15/2026

Worship Service 69

	Given Given 3/15/2026	Given Year to Date	Needed Weekly to Attain 2026 Budget
Current	\$1,990.00	\$28,533.80	\$2,630.00
Benevolence	\$50.00	\$1,435.00	\$ 77.00
Building Improvement	\$35.00	\$690.00	

BETHEL'S MINISTERS

PASTOR:	Peggy Terhune, Synodical Approved Minister
CONTACT INFO	Phone - 704 305-0752 Email - peggy.terhune@gmail.com
MINISTERS:	All Members of Bethel Lutheran Church
ORGANIST:	Cathy Williams
CHOIR DIRECTOR:	Kara Thurston
PARISH ADMINISTRATOR	Martha Graham 704 202-3962
2026 COUNCIL CHAIRMAN	Todd Corriher 704 433-6729
ONE CHURCH/ONE CHILD COORD:	Dave Hincemon and Lora Owen
CHURCH PHONE:	704-636-0331
CHURCH E-MAIL:	parishadmin@bethellutheranofSalisbury.com
CHURCH WEBSITE	Bethelsalisbury.org
WIFI	Bethel Guest Password Lutheran

ASSISTING MINISTERS

LECTOR:	Todd Corriher
ACOLYTE:	Joey Shock
CRUCIFER:	Maddie Shock
COUNCIL HOST:	Mike & Monica Raney
ALTAR GUILD:	Jennifer Spry, Jo Simmons, Crystal Shock
USHERS:	Mike Spry, Capt., Mike Raney, Aaron Thurston, Crystal Shock



**God's work.
Our hands.**

