# Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

February 23, 2025 – 10am Modern Worship, ELW Setting 3

Prelude Music Be Thou My Vision

**BLC Choir** 

Announcements Temple Talk / Safety and Security

# **Confession and Forgiveness**

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life. **C: Amen.** 

P: Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Merciful God,

C: ... you speak blessing and compassion into the world. Forgive us for the ways we act with judgment, cruelty, or indifference. We ignore the needs of our neighbors; we resist your call to oppose injustice; we give in to scarcity and fear; we assume the worst about one another. Cleanse us from our faults and release us from their grasp. Show us your lovingkindness. Restore our hearts and repair your world, that we may live in Christ's ways. Amen.

P: God proclaims these words of assurance: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine." In + Christ, you are forgiven. In the Spirit, you are made free. Refreshed by the waters of mercy, live anew as beloved children of God.

C: Amen.

Gathering Song:

Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love

ELW 708

# Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all! C: And also with you!

# Kyrie

A: In peace, let us pray to the Lord. C: Lord, have mercy.

A: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. C: Lord, have mercy.

A: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord. **C: Lord, have mercy.** 

A: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

## C: Lord, have mercy.

A: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. C: Amen.

# Prayer of the Day

#### A: Let us pray together,

C: O Lord Jesus, make us instruments of your peace, that where there is hatred, we may sow love, where there is injury, pardon, and where there is despair, hope. Grant, O divine master, that we may seek to console, to understand, and to love in your name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## First Reading: Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Many years after being sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, Joseph reveals himself to them. Now the second-incommand in Egypt, Joseph reassures his brothers that God has used their evil intentions for good to preserve life during a devastating famine, and Joseph forgives them.

3 Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence. 4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. 5 And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. 6 For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. 7 God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. 8 So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. 9 Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. 10 You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. 11 I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.'" 15 And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

L: The Word of the Lord C: Thanks be to God

## Psalm: Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40

1 Do not be provoked by evildoers; do not be jealous of those who do wrong.2 For they shall soon wither like the grass, and like the green grass fade away.

3 Put your trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and find safe pasture. 4 Take delight in the Lord, who shall give you your heart's desire.

5 Commit your way to the Lord; put your trust in the Lord, and see what God will do. 6 The Lord will make your vindication as clear as the light and the justice of your case like the noonday sun.

7 Be still before the Lord and wait patiently. Do not be provoked by the one who prospers, the one who succeeds in evil schemes.

8 Refrain from anger, leave rage alone; do not be provoked; it leads only to evil.

9 For evildoers shall be cut off, but those who hope in the Lord shall possess the land. 10 In a little while the wicked shall be no more; even if you search out their place, they will not be there.

11 But the lowly shall possess the land; they will delight in abundance of peace. 39 But the deliverance of the righteous comes from you, O Lord; you are their stronghold in time of trouble. 40 You, O Lord, will help them and rescue them; you will rescue them from the wicked and deliver them, because in you they seek refuge.



# Gospel: Luke 6:27-38

Jesus continues to address a crowd of his disciples. He invites his followers to shower radical love, blessing, forgiveness, generosity, and trust even on enemies and outsiders. Living in harmony with God's intent brings the reward of overflowing blessing.

#### P: A reading from... C: Glory to You, O Lord.

Jesus said: 27 "But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. 29 If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. 30 Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. 31 Do to others as you would have them do to you. 32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. 35 But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. 37 "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; 38 give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.C: Praise to you, O Christ.

## Sermon

Song of the Day:

Lord of Glory, You Have Brought Us

Pastor Paul Busekist

ELW 707

## **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 Church / Sign of the Peace (Let us give one another a sign of peace according to your comfort level.)

## Offering

Offering Song:		Zeke Clemons
Offertory:	We Place Upon Your Table, Lord (v 1 & 3)	ELW 467

# **Offering Prayer**

A: Let us pray together.

C: God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always. Amen.

# Words of Institution

# 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.

**Communion** (Please note: gluten-free wafers and white grape juice cups are available)

Communion Songs:	I Come with Joy	ELW 482
_	Just a Closer Walk with Thee	ELW 697

# **Final Blessing**

P: The Spirit of the triune God + bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love. C: Amen.

Sending Song:

We Are Called

ELW 720

## Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Live in hope.C: Thanks be to God.



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

2/24—Paul Rundhaug2/26—Crystal Fernholz

2/26—Barb Beyer 2/26—Fay Miller

#### Worship Servants for February 23

Assisting Minister—Bethany Uhl Lector—Tina Dohm Musicians: David Husser, Zeke Clemons, Phil & Denice Bossardet, Pr Paul Today's altar flowers are donated: By Butch Waisanen in Celebration of our church community Hospitality—Tim & Peggy Goebel A/V—Dale Wentzloff / Jim Hinds Cookies/Coffee— Gail Goldsmith / Mary Ann Tanis Welcome Table— VOLUNTEER Bell Ringer—Tim Goebel Front Door Monitors: Tina Dohm Altar Guild— Kate Holtfreter / Erin Word Tech Support—Julia Acker Counters—Kate Holtfreter / Suzanne Lehto

The Safety and Security committee (Jana Rockne, Gail Goldsmith and Maureen Bauer) will be showing a short video clip today as part of a Temple Talk. There will be a brief time after the clip for questions and answers. The topic is a tough one - how to respond in the event of an active shooter or serious threat during a church service or while in a group gathering in the church. Please watch the clip, learn from it and feel stronger as a result of our continued education and attention to church safety. As always, we hope this information is never needed. AND we have a responsibility to ourselves and one another to be as prepared as possible. Additionally, as a reminder to new members and those who may have forgotten: please familiarize yourself with the BLC Safety and Security Policy, Procedures and Guidelines. Copies will be available for you to take home.

The annual ski trip is TODAY! We will be meeting at Caberfae in Cadillac at 1pm - anyone who enjoys the winter wonderland is welcome to join us! We will be covering the costs for any youth that volunteered at the pancake breakfast - everyone else, please be aware that you will just need to pay your own way. We will all meet at The Timbers Restaurant at 6pm for dinner. If you don't like to ski or snowboard, Alanna will just be watching and would love your company! Reach out and let her know if you plan to attend! More information is available in your weekly email.

**What IS GRIEVING?** Could it be the loss of a marriage, your home, or community, good health, a dream or something else? The list can go on and on. No matter the loss you have a family here at Bethlehem that loves you, wants to support you, and be here for you! We meet here on the first Monday of the month from 3:30-4:30 and on the third Monday from 5:30-6:30. If you have any questions, please contact Peggy Burns 231-392-6913.

The Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will begin at 5:30 on March 4th. The menu will be: Buttermilk and gluten free pancakes, sausage links, crustless quiche (gluten free) with ham and cheese, fruit, juice and coffee. We will play games after dinner, so bring your favorite games. Please come for a nice evening of food, fellowship and fun.

First Communion Classes will begin on Sunday, March 9th at 9:00am. For any questions, please see either Pr Paul or Sherri Helman.

**NEW MEMBER MEETING:** If you want to be an official member of BLC, <u>please join us Sunday March 9 after the</u> <u>service in the library.</u> We will have some snacks, learn about Bethlehem, and have a chance to visit with some long-time and potential new members. Bring your calendar so we can set the date for official date of your acceptance during a Sunday service.

Do you have a famous chili or soup recipe? Or, do you just really love eating chili or soup? The Soup & Chili Cook-Off is back on Sunday, March 16th, right after church. We will be raising funds to support Bethlehem's youth program! Prizes will be awarded for best in each category (beef chili, chicken chili, vegetarian chili, and soup) as well as for overall winner! Enter your special recipe or just come to enjoy a delicious lunch. Email Alanna at alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org to enter the competition!

**BOOK CLUB NEWS**: The next meeting will be <u>Wed, Mar 19 at 5:30</u>. We will be reading "*The Best Part of Us*" by Sally Cole-Misch. <u>Please enter the kitchen door and join us in the Fellowship Hall</u> if you like to discuss good books. Any questions can be directed to Cindy Monroe at <u>cmonroe@chartermi.net</u>.

**Scottish Country Folk Dancing at BLC:** Some of you have come to the Contra dance on Sat nights here at BLC. Here is a chance to watch or try something a little different. The first gathering will be held on Sunday Apr 27 beginning at 12:15. You can come and have "dessert first" with your BLC friends and then meet some friendly Scottish folks in their plaid kilts who will make share a light meal including haggis and shortbread. Than you can have a chance to try some basic moves in Scottish country folk dancing. This first event will be free for anyone who is interested.

**ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:** Please mark June 8 on your calendar and plan to attend if you can. It is critical for you to be involved in the affairs of your congregation. Also, if any of you are thinking about dipping your toes in the water and becoming more involved as a leader there will be openings on the endowment committees and on council. All of the groups are very welcoming and every person's individual thoughts and talents bring so much more to a group. Please think and pray about it. You can leave your name with the office or any committee or council member.

**HOW DO WE CARE AND SERVE?** John 12:26 "Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant will also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me". YOU ARE LOVED BY YOUR CHURCH FAMLY. If you would like to have a visit and you would like to receive Communion, Christian Care Giving is here for you! Please let Peggy Burns at 231-392-6914 know and we will have one of our Care Givers come and see you.

**DRIVING VOLUNTEERS?:** Thanks to those who have already said "yes" to being a regular or substitute driver to transport a delightful member couple to church. They have good mobility but due to other health issues currently cannot drive. They live at the east end of 14th street so it should be an easy pick-up and drop off for any members coming from the south or west side of town. They will be out of town with their family during the months of Feb and March, so rides will need to be lined up as of the beginning of April. If you would like to be added to the list of volunteers please contact Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net or 231 631 0887.

How to support those needing help in California: Many of you may be asking yourself what you can do. Here is one way to help that was used when BLC provided monetary support to the survivors of the hurricanes a few months ago. You do NOT need to be a member of Thrivent but you will need to use a credit card. Go to https://thrivent.cotribute.co/events/1091099/detail Yes, that funny spelling is correct, because Thrivent is CO-donating with you. Your donation will be "amplified" by Thrivent with the organization donating \$1 for every \$2 you donate! Their goal is \$1,000,000 in personal donations and they will donate \$500,000. Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) is one of the organizations coordinating with partners to assess the needs of people impacted by the wildfires and provide assistance. They will provide for immediate needs and recovery amid the widespread destruction. LDR has set its goal at \$250,000 and has already raised \$138,066. It is committed to accompanying recovering communities for months and years to come.

**<u>CHAIR YOGA</u>**: Chair Yoga continues every Monday at 3:00 in the Fellowship Hall. Cost is \$5.00 per person. It is slow paced stretches that helps with balance, flexibility and relaxation. Come and try it out.

**THANK YOU NOTE:** Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Thank you for your time and talent with all the baking you did for our February Event Night. The moms had a dessert before dinner that night and loved all the goodies you made them. Single MOMM could not serve our moms without the support of community members like Bethlehem! We appreciate all the love & support you've given. Blessings, Karie & the Single MOMM Team

**Giving Statements Available**: Your individual giving statements is available in your mailbox in the Narthex. The statement covers giving from January 1st through December 31, 2024 Please pick them up at your convenience. To save on postage, I will mail out the ones not picked up by the end of February. Thank you for your generous support for the programs and ministries of your church. We are all blessed by your faithful giving. Your Bookkeeper

<u>Alcoholics Anonymous</u>: TC Groups are holding their Open Talk here at Bethlehem on three Saturday nights of each month from 8:00-9:00pm. They will not meet here on the second Saturday due to Contra Dancing on that night where they will meet at their TC Group office across from Sara Lee..

**<u>Coffee and Cookies on Sunday</u>**: Remember that treats and a drink on Sunday are appreciated by all. The sign-up sheet has many BLANK spaces so please take a moment to sign up to bring cookies or some other tasty treat on the Sunday that works best for you. Or sign up to prepare the coffee to give our loyal volunteer Mary Ann Tanis a day off.

**Looking for A/V Volunteers!** Would you be interested in volunteering to help with audio/visual up in the choir loft during services? We are looking to add a few more A/V volunteers to our list! Our current volunteers are absolutely fantastic! We would love to add a few more people to the rotation and have a few more people on the list. If you would be interested in learning, please contact Barbara Oster.

**Volunteers for Watching the Front Door During Worship**: The Safety and Security Committee has the new sign up sheets available. We need volunteers who can be available to stay in the Gathering Space to lock the doors and let in late comers for Sundays. We appreciate all of the volunteers. If you have any questions, the committee members are Gail Goldsmith, Maureen Bauer, and Jana Rockne.

The February issue of the STAR is now available. If you receive the weekly email, your March issue will be emailed on March 1st. The shut-ins will receive an issue by mail. There will also be a few copies available on the counter by the mailboxes. You may also contact the office at 947-9880 to request that mail delivery continues. For current issues of the Star, feel free to check online at www.bethlehemtc.org < About Us > "The Online Bethlehem Star" or type this URL to get these directly: http://www.bethlehemtc.org/the-bethlehem-star-newsletter.

#### Wednesday Bible Studies:

The Adult Bible Study meets from 9:30am—11:30am with the topic of the Book of 1 Corinthians The Zoom Bible Study meets from 1:30pm—3:00pm – The group will not meet on Feb 26 and March 5. They will begin a 4-week study of the Book of Isaiah on Wednesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. Contact either Pr. Paul or Barbara with questions.

**PROTECT OUR CARPET**: spills always happen, but we now have TWO consistent ways to deal with them. Thanks to an anonymous donor we now have an actual carpet cleaning machine stored in the maintenance closet. If you cause one or see a spot, please grab the spot cleaner in the squirt container in the cabinet below the coffee makers in the Fellowship Hall. Just follow the directions on the bottle and we should be able to keep our carpet in good condition. But, if the stain is too big or too resistant, please use the carpet cleaning machine. Thank you!!

**Food pantry news**: Winter has definitely come in with a bang. In order to keep our food pantry open in these freezing temperatures, we have to shift the types of items we keep it stocked with. Foods in cans and glass jars can't withstand these temperatures. Therefore, consider picking up dry good, especially things like powdered milk, cereal, and pasta. We can also stock hand and foot warmers and some personal care items. Thank you in advance for your generous and continued support of our little pantry. Suzanne and Kathie

You are Invited to Sunday Morning Adult Education: it is that time again, time to power up our learning and sharing of Scripture. Adult Education has resumed. We will meet in the Youth Room from 9:15 to 9:45 each Sunday to discuss the lessons for the day. This is a relaxed venue, with inquisitive sharing, practical application, and an opportunity to get better acquainted with your brothers and sisters in Christ! We hope you will join... All Are Welcome!!!!

**Spotlight on Zeke**: So many of us enjoy Zeke's talents with religious music, but did you know that he plays other kinds of music at various locations in the Traverse City area? Here is a list of his engagements in the next month that are close to TC:

Wed 2/26—The Pub, Traverse City 7:00pm

#### Building and Office Hours are: 9:00am - 2:30pm, Monday - Thursday. Office Phone #: 231-947-9880

**Offerings:** Even though the offering plates are passed during the service, you may use the vase in the back of the Sanctuary if you prefer not to touch the offering plate.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**: We often find the front door and/or the kitchen door unlocked when there is no one in the building. Please be sure that the doors are locked when you leave.

#### Please Note:

Barbara Oster/Administrative Assistant works 9:00am-2:30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday <u>Phil Anderson/Bookkeeper</u> works 8:30am-12:30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. <u>Alanna Steffunick-Boomer/Ministry Coordinator</u> works 9:00am-2:30pm – in the office on Tuesday and Wednesday and from home on Thursday – Please note that this is a new schedule

Looking for a link to last month's full Council minutes? Type this address/url into your web browser to get the latest approved minutes from Council: bethlehemtc.org/Council-Minutes OR you may call the office to request a copy.

#### **Prayer Requests:**

- <u>Prayer Chain</u>: Please contact Jan Stretlien at jstretlien@gmail.com or 231-947-3265
- <u>Prayers read from the altar</u>: Please call Administrative Assistant in the church office 231-947-9880 or admin@bethlehemtc.org

<u>Celebrate a new child in your life with a rose on the baptismal font!</u> Cost \$10.00 per rose. Contact Barbara Oster at beo6475@yahoo.com or 231.668.7038.

Norm Fred has helped a previously homeless couple for a few years. They are proud people and do not like to be given charity but they will accept help in the form of donated cans that they can recycle for money. Please bring in your recyclables in for them. Leave them in plastic bags by the garage. These are nice people. There, but for the Grace of our God, go we.

<u>Are you looking for the Caring Table for your donations?</u> It is now located inside the coat room to the right. Your donations are very much appreciated.

**LOST AND FOUND**: If you lose something in the church building, please check our new Lost and Found box located in the Coat Room. Also, if you find something, please put it in the box.

<u>Yarn Available</u>: There is yarn available free for the taking located in the cabinets located under the mailboxes in the Narthex. Take what you need.

**Name tags:** Your name tags are in your mailboxes. Please retrieve them so you can proudly wear them on Sunday mornings. We often have visitors and with so many recent new members it helps them if they can see a friendly face and attach a name to it.

<u>A big thank you to all who have turned in Olesons' slips</u>. On January 7th, we received a check from Olesons for \$317.06. Olesons' slips never expire. Please continue to turn in your Olesons receipts to Bethlehem. Thanks so much!!! Also, the area for the Oleson receipts is in the lower cabinets below the mailboxes (under the A-B-Cs...). The cabinet door is marked with the receptacle inside. Unfortunately, we are no longer collecting the receipts from Family Fair.

**Hoop's Pet Food Pantry**: This is the only pet food pantry in NW lower Michigan. They primarily provide dry food, wet food, treats, cat litter and toys for mostly dogs and cats but they will support any type of pet to the best of their ability. Please visit them at the Square Deal Country Store, 900 Woodmere Ave, **TC from 11:00am – 2:00pm on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of every month** with your donations OR <u>you may leave donations in the tub on our "donations"</u> table in the coat room. The volunteers have expressed their appreciation when receiving our donations.

Have something important going on at Bethlehem that you'd like others to know about? Maybe a Small Group? A Club Event? Feature it on the Screen Announcements, weekly emails and on our Facebook Events Page! If there is something you'd like featured or included in any of these, please reach out to alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org If you are not getting the weekly emails for any reason, please contact Alanna.

**Please consider signing up for Altar Flowers for a Sunday service**. NOTE: There are no altar flowers during Lent. Please use the sign-up poster in the Narthex by signing on the date you request. Then fill out a pink slip with the necessary information and place it and a check for \$40 (payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church or BLC) in the offering plate on Sunday morning (Preferable) or during the week, in the Administrative Assistant's mailbox near the church office entrance. You may select either "in honor" or "in memory" or "to celebrate". If someone has already signed on the date you would like, feel free to add your name – we welcome more than one on a Sunday.

The church calendar is below. Please be sure to notify the office (admin@bethlehemtc.org or 231.947.9880) to be sure that your group is of the calendar.

Sunday, February 23 Ski Trip (Intergenerational) 9:15am—Sunday School 9:15am—Adult Education (YR) 10:00am--Worship Service (S)

Monday, February 24 2:30pm—Choir rehearsal (S) 3:00pm—Chair Yoga (FH)

Tuesday, February 25 Bulletin articles due today 9:00am—LWR Quilters (FH)

9:00am—LWR Quilters (FH) 9:00am—Property Work Group



Wednesday, February 26

9:30am—Adult Bible Study (Library) 11:30am—Music Rehearsal (S) 12:00pm—WELCA Board meeting (Library) 1:30pm—Zoom Bible Study (Zoom & YR)

Thursday, February 27 5:30pm—ACA (FH)

Saturday, March 1 8:00pm—AA (FH)

Sunday, March 2 9:15am—Sunday School 9:15am—Adult Education (YR) 10:00am--Worship Service (S) 11:15am—Worship and Music Meeting (CR) 2:00pm—Girl Scouts (Library)





