



Welcome to Bethlehem Lutheran Church

God's family working together to welcome all.



4th Sunday of Easter

April 17th & 21st

W8267 Hwy 33 East,
Portage, Wisconsin 53901

Pastor Jaime Benson

Office: 608-742-8502

www.bethlehemLCportage.org

Church Office Hours:

Mon-Wed 9 am to 3 pm

Thurs-Fri 9 am to 12 pm

or by appointment

Hearing assistance devices are available on the counter in the Narthex for your convenience. Please ask the usher for help.

Large print copies of the bulletin are available in the Narthex.

Daily Devotionals are available in the Narthex. These come out quarterly.

Holy Communion is celebrated each week; all people of God are welcome. We offer it two ways: prepacked and communion at the altar. You can pick up the prefilled communion cup on your way into the sanctuary or ask the usher for it at communion time. It has a wafer, which you open first by lifting the clear cellophane on top and then the grape juice. If you would like a **gluten free wafer**, please let the usher know before the start of worship. We also offer communion at the altar for those that wish to come up. Please fill out a Communion Card found in the pew racks and give it to the usher when you come up for communion.

Children's Worship Activity Bags are available in the Narthex with activities for your children, please help yourself. You can place the used activity bags in the basket located beneath the activity bag tree as you leave. We have a **Cry Room** for your comfort where you can hear and see the service.

Ways to stay connected. Follow us on



Enter to praise

We invite those who are able to stand each time this symbol ❖ appears in the bulletin.

❖ THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Alleluia! Christ is risen! **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the wellspring of grace, our Easter and our joy. **Amen.**
Look, here is water! **Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

Immersed in the promises of baptism, let us give thanks for what God has done for us. We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your voice thundered over the deep and water became the essence of life. Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers. The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day. Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea into freedom's land. In a desert pool the Ethiopian official entered your boundless baptismal life. Look, here is water! **Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love, freeing us to live as Easter people. We rejoice with glad hearts, giving all honor and praise to you, through the risen Christ, our source of living water, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

Look, here is water! **Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who writes the law on our hearts, who draws all people together through Jesus. **Amen.**

❖ GATHERING HYMN

#369 v 1-3 "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Alleluia!"

❖ 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.**

❖ PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord Christ, good shepherd of the sheep, you seek the lost and guide us into your fold. Feed us, and we shall be satisfied; heal us, and we shall be whole. Make us one with you, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

FIRST READING: Acts 4:5-12

⁵The next day [the] rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, ⁶with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. ⁷When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" ⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, ¹⁰let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of

Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. ¹¹This Jesus is ‘the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.’ ¹²There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.” The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: 23

¹The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

²**The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.**

³You restore my soul, O LORD, and guide me along right pathways for your name’s sake.

⁴**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

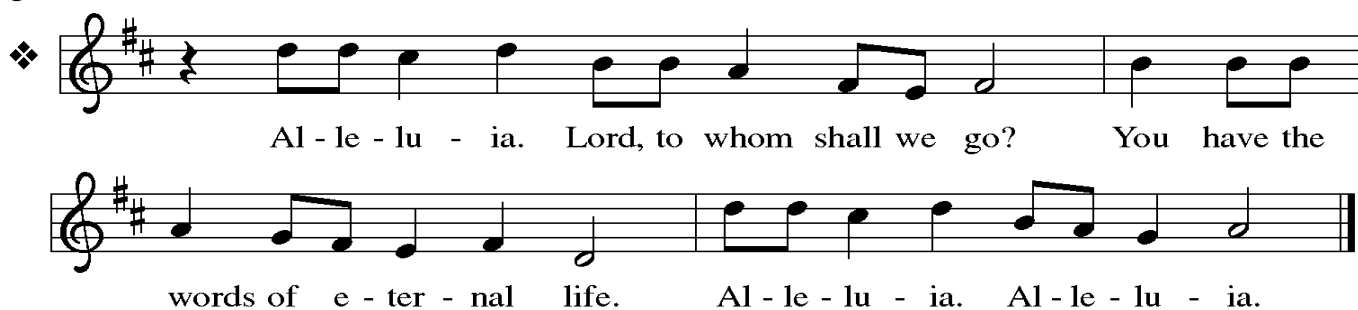
⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

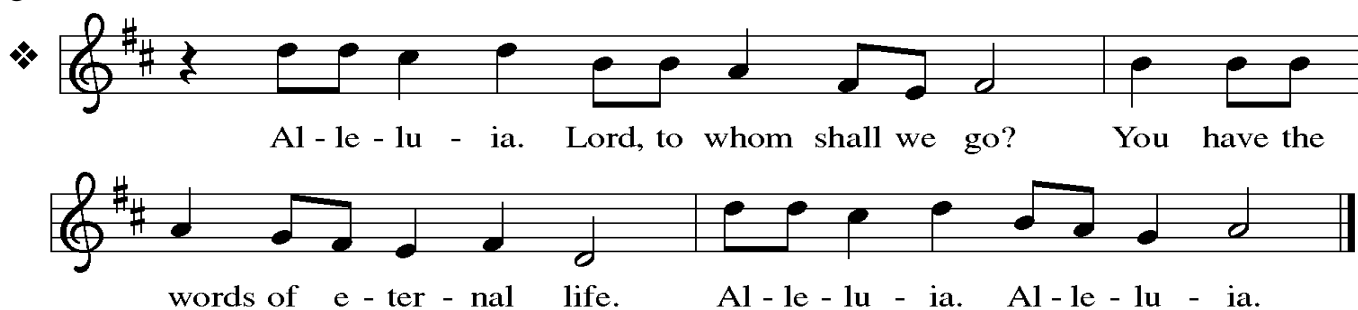
⁶**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

SECOND READING: 1 John 3:16-24

¹⁶We know love by this, that [Jesus Christ] laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. ¹⁷How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? ¹⁸Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. ¹⁹And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him ²⁰whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; ²²and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

²³And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us. The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**



❖ 

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

GOSPEL READING: John 10:10-18

The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. [Jesus said:] ¹¹“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf

coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”
The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

❖ HYMN OF THE DAY

“His Mercy is More”

❖ THE 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 power of 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.

❖ MISSION STATEMENT

Bethlehem Lutheran Church is a growing community where we love inclusively, welcome, serve, and thrive through our relationship with God.

❖ INSTALLATION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Bonnie Dixon & Amanda Bell

❖ THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *Pray aloud as the Spirit guides you.*

P: Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.

A brief silence.

Shepherding God, gather your church whenever we wander from you and one another. Empower our church in ministries around the world to worship and serve alongside global companions as equal partners and coworkers in the gospel. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Nurturing God, preserve the health of biomes and ecosystems. Inspire scientists, researchers, conservation organizations, and all people entrusted with the task of caring for creation, that we may be better stewards of the world around us. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, lead nations and communities to share resources, cooperate in solving conflicts, and listen to the wisdom of Indigenous peoples. Help all those with power to share it and to use such power for good. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Loving God, protect the very young and the very old, those living without housing, victims of domestic abuse, all who live with chronic illness or compromised immune systems, those on our prayer list, and those in our hearts. Guide communities to actively care for people who are vulnerable. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, help this and all communities of faith to listen for your voice. Call us away from things that distract us from following you. Invite us to more deeply love and serve people who are lonely, isolated, and on the margins. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Living God, we give thanks for our ancestors in faith. Strengthen us to share the good news in our own day. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

P: Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord. **Amen.**

❖ PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

We share our offerings for the mission of Christ through Bethlehem. Thank you for your participation in this ministry to the Glory of God!

❖ OFFERING PRAYER

Risen One, you call us to believe and bear fruit. May the gifts that we offer here be signs of your abiding love. Form us to be your witnesses in the world, through Jesus Christ, our true vine. **Amen.**

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 our thanks and praise.**

...we praise your name and join their unending hymn...

❖

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. 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 in the high - est.

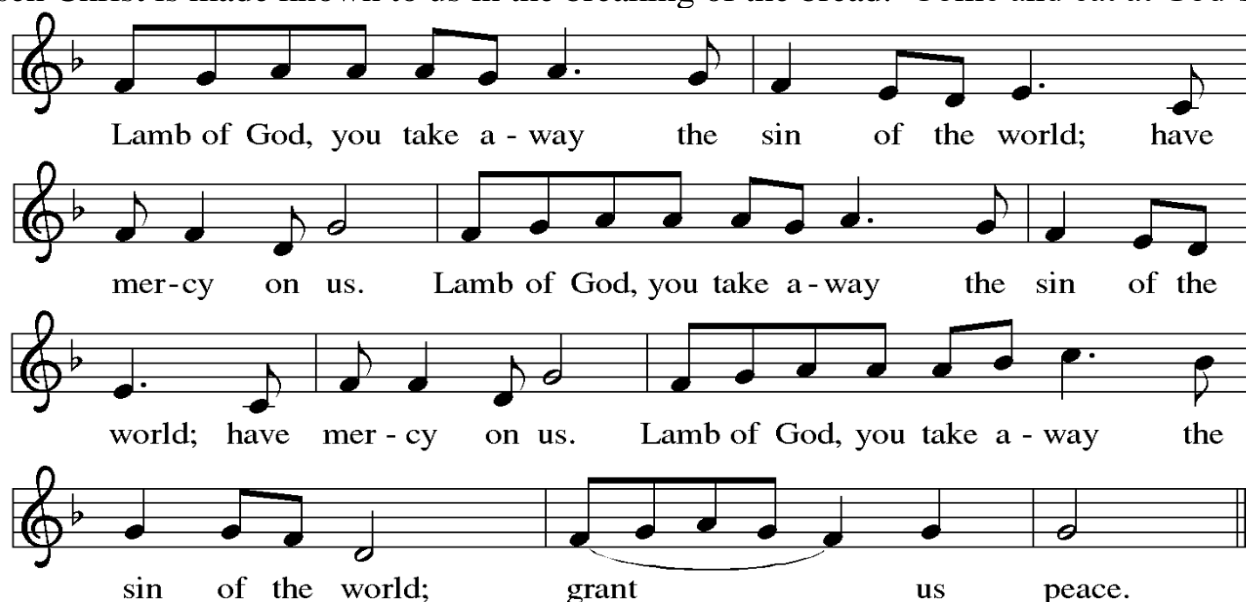
❖ WORDS OF INSTITUTION

❖ THE 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.

❖ INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The risen Christ is made known to us in the breaking of the bread. Come and eat at God's table.



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 peace.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

You may come forward to receive communion at this time. If you prefer to celebrate communion in your pew with prepackaged elements, please let the usher know.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Shepherding God, you have prepared a table before us and nourished us with your love. Send us forth from this banquet to proclaim your goodness and share the abundant mercy of Jesus, our redeemer and friend. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Highway clean-up is today at 10:15 am. We will meet in the fellowship hall.
- Seeking a gardening crew to plant and/or water annuals. Please contact the office.

MILESTONES

❖ BLESSING

The God of resurrection power, the Christ of unending joy, and the Spirit of Easter hope ✠ bless you now and always. **Amen.**

❖ SENDING HYMN

#660 "Lift High the Cross"

❖ DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

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Depart to Share

Wednesday Worship Team, 5:30 pm 4/17

Music: Carla

Acolyte: Beau Grosklaus

Altar Guild/Com. Assist.: Kathy Lawrence

Sunday Worship Team, 9:00 am 4/21

Music: Carla

Reader: Lisa Cook

Usher: Marie Rohrbacher

Video Production: Jeff Melby

Acolyte: Leah Haroldson

Altar Guild/Com. Assist.: Kerry Melby

Communion Assistant: Bobbie Goodman

Wednesday Worship Team, 5:30 pm 4/24

Music: Sam

Acolyte: Colin Langan

Altar Guild/Com. Assist.: Cara Druckrey

Sunday Worship Team, 9:00 am 4/28

Music: Carla

Reader: Darlene Anderson

Usher: Sandra Sween

Video Production:

Acolyte: Zane Bovre

Altar Guild/Com. Assist.: Lisa Cook

Communion Assistant: Ann Ciske

Church Prayer List, please pray for:

Bonnie Bender, Lee Chenoweth, Jim Crawford, Jeff Melby, Shelly Ritter, Mark Teslik, Donn Trinrud

Our Extended Family Prayer List:

Lavern Allhiser (brother-in-law of Sandy Sween)

Janice Atkinson (sister of Betty Ring)

Tony Dixon (nephew of Brian Franson & Bonnie Dixon)

Chris Kelly (friend of Ginny & Jack Paulson & Nancy & Emil Loether)

Sue Linton (friend of Betty Ring)

Yvonne Marshall (daughter of Jean Elliott)

Freda Manzullo (sister of Mark Teslik)

Deb Moe & family (cousin of Sandra Sween)

Tatiana Sampson (niece of Jean Elliott)

Sharon Stickford (friend of Ginny Paulson)

Tom Teslik (son of Mark Teslik)

Jody Tilton (granddaughter of Cloe Rehdantz)

Giving Statements

First quarter giving statements have been emailed out or are on the narthex table ready for pick up. Thank you!



Message Box



There is a message box on the narthex table just before you enter the sanctuary. Please feel free to leave any messages for Pastor Jaime or Amy in the office. This gets checked regularly and will help things be a little less hectic before worship service. Thank you!

Class of 2024

Attention BLC Graduates! Please get the form emailed to you back to the office by April 22nd!





Join us **today** after worship service and help get the ditches cleaned-up! Vests will be provided. This is great practice for the church yard clean-up coming up **May 4th at 9:00 am!**

Looking for a gardening crew!

If anyone is interested in planting annuals around the church and/or watering on a rotational basis, please contact the office! 608-742-8502



This Week at BLC:

Monday, April 22nd

10:30 am Tai Chi
1:00 pm Card Club

Tuesday, April 23rd

9:00 am Quilters
11:30 am Bible Study

Wednesday, April 24th

10:30 am Tai Chi
5:30 pm Worship

Friday, April 26th

10:30 am Tai Chi

Saturday, April 27th

1:00 pm Women's Tea

Sunday, April 28th

9:00 am Worship

Portage Community VBS
 Held at Portage United Methodist Church
 July 29-August 2
 8.30AM-Noon
 ages 4 to entering 6th grade welcomed
 Contact Olivia Bue with any questions 909.996.7722

Portage Community VBS is sponsored by: Bethlehem Lutheran Church, St. Mary's Catholic Churches, Trinity United Parish, and Portage United Methodist Church

Register early for VBS for savings!!! Forms are on the table in the narthex.

Plant sale, Sunday, **May 19th**! As you head out to the garden, if you have perennials you'd like to split, you can donate them to the church for our plant sale! Please label them with the plant identification, planting instructions & a picture of when it is full grown or blooming. Please bring them the week of the sale. Office hours are M-W 9-3 pm and Th-F 9-12 pm. There will be hanging flower baskets and other annuals also for sale.

If you have any questions, please contact Kerry Melby.

