



Fifth Sunday After Pentecost

Sunday, June 28, 2026

Esther Lutheran Church, ELCA

Knowing Christ – Making Christ Known Through Faith, Hope & Love

Introduction:

The welcome of baptism is for all God's children. This baptismal gift sets us free from the power of sin and death. In today's gospel, Christ promises that the disciple who gives a cup of cold water to the little ones serves Christ himself. From worship we are sent on our baptismal mission: to serve the little ones of this world and to be a sign of God's merciful welcome.

**PRELUDE**

**BELL**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**GATHERING**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God*

*Please stand as you are able*

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP:**

P: Because we trust in God's love,

C: **Our hearts are happy because we are delivered.**

P: We do not suffer long.

C: **Before God gives light to our eyes.**

P: Let us sing to the Lord,

C: **Because God has been very generous with us.**

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, whose compassion endures forever.

C: **Amen.**

**\*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:**

P: We confess our sins before God and one another.  
*Pause for silence and reflection.*

P: Patient God,

**C: You have taught us all we need to be your faithful people. And yet we persist in going our own way, doing our own thing, and minding our own business when we ought to be about the business of your kingdom. Forgive our selfish neglect of others and bring us back into wholeness with our brothers and sisters. Amen.**

P: God is merciful, patient, kind and forgiving. We have been pardoned for all that we have done, and all that we have overlooked. May we give now as we have received: generously and extravagantly, in the way of our loving teacher, savior and friend.

**C: Amen.**

**\*GATHERING HYMN: “All Are Welcome” (ELW 641)**

**1 Let us build a house where love can dwell  
and all can safely live,  
a place where saints and children tell  
how hearts learn to forgive.  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,  
rock of faith and vault of grace;  
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:**

*Refrain*

**All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.**

**2 Let us build a house where prophets speak,  
and words are strong and true,  
where all God's children dare to seek  
to dream God's reign anew.  
Here the cross shall stand as witness  
and as symbol of God's grace;  
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:**

*Refrain*

All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

- 3 Let us build a house where love is found  
in water, wine and wheat:  
a banquet hall on holy ground  
where peace and justice meet.  
Here the love of God, through Jesus,  
is revealed in time and space;  
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us:

*Refrain*

All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

- 4 Let us build a house where hands will reach  
beyond the wood and stone  
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,  
and live the Word they've known.  
Here the outcast and the stranger  
bear the image of God's face;  
let us bring an end to fear and danger:

*Refrain*

All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

- 5 Let us build a house where all are named,  
their songs and visions heard  
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed  
as words within the Word.  
Built of tears and cries and laughter,  
prayers of faith and songs of grace,  
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:

*Refrain*

All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

**\*GREETING:**

**P:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C:** **And also with you.**

**\*KYRIE: *sung* (ELW pg. 213)**

Pulpit Side: Kyrie eleison:	<b>Organ Side: Lord, have mercy.</b>
Pulpit Side: Christe eleison:	<b>Organ Side: Christ, have mercy.</b>
Pulpit Side: Kyrie eleison:	<b>Organ Side: Lord, have mercy.</b>

**\*CANTICLE OF PRAISE “*Glory to God*” (ELW pg. 213)**

**Glory to God, glory to God,  
glory to God in the highest;  
glory to God, glory to God,  
and peace to God’s people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you,  
we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.  
Glory to God, glory to God,  
glory to God in the highest;  
glory to God, glory to God,  
and peace to God’s people on earth.**

**Lord Jesus Christ,  
only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.**

**Glory to God, glory to God,**

**glory to God in the highest;  
glory to God, glory to God,  
and peace to God's people on earth.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

**Glory to God, glory to God,  
glory to God in the highest;  
glory to God, glory to God,  
and peace to God's people on earth,  
and peace to God's people on earth.**

**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

**P: O God,**

**C: You direct our lives by your grace, and your words of justice and mercy  
reshape the world. Mold us into a people who welcome your word and  
serve one another, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
Amen.**

*Please be seated*

**WORD**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song*

**FIRST READING: JEREMIAH 28:5-9**

*Through a symbolic action Jeremiah insisted that Judah and all the surrounding nations should submit to the king of Babylon (Jer. 27). Hananiah contradicted the word of Jeremiah, who in reply insisted that Hananiah's rosy prediction should not be believed until it came true. God confirmed the word of Jeremiah and sentenced the false prophet Hananiah to death (vv. 16-17).*

<sup>5</sup>The prophet Jeremiah spoke to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of the Lord, <sup>6</sup>and the prophet Jeremiah said, "Amen! May the Lord do so; may the Lord fulfill the words that you have prophesied and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the Lord and all the exiles. <sup>7</sup>But listen now to this word that I speak in

your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. <sup>8</sup>The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. <sup>9</sup>As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes true, then it will be known that the Lord has truly sent the prophet.” Here ends the first reading.

**PSALM 89:1-4, 15-18 ~ Congregation reads the bold**  
*Your love, O Lord, forever will I sing. (Ps. 89:1)*

<sup>1</sup>Your love, O Lord, forever will I sing; from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.

**<sup>2</sup>For I am persuaded that your steadfast love is established forever; you have set your faithfulness firmly in the heavens.**

<sup>3</sup>I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn an oath to David my servant:

**<sup>4</sup>I will establish your line forever and preserve your throne for all generations.**

<sup>5</sup>Happy are the people who know the festal shout! They walk, O Lord, in the light of your presence.

**<sup>6</sup>They rejoice daily in your name; they are jubilant in your righteousness.**

<sup>7</sup>For you are the glory of their strength, and by your favor our might is exalted.

**<sup>8</sup>Truly, our shield belongs to the Lord; our king to the Holy One of Israel.**

**SECOND READING: ROMANS 6:12-23**

*Sin is an enslaving power which motivates us to live self-serving, disobedient lives. Sin's final payoff is death. We, however, have been set free from sin's slavery to live obediently under God's grace, whose end is the free gift of eternal life.*

<sup>12</sup>Do not let sin reign in your mortal bodies, so that you obey their desires. <sup>13</sup>No longer present your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. <sup>14</sup>For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

<sup>15</sup>What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no

means! <sup>16</sup>Do you not know that, if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? <sup>17</sup>But thanks be to God that you who were slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted <sup>18</sup>and that you, having been set free from sin, have become enslaved to righteousness. <sup>19</sup>I am speaking in human terms because of your limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and lawlessness, leading to even more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, leading to sanctification. <sup>20</sup>When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. <sup>21</sup>So what fruit did you then gain from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. <sup>22</sup>But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the fruit you have leads to sanctification, and the end is eternal life. <sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Here ends the second reading.

### **THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: (ELW pg. 216)**

**Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life.**

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

### **GOSPEL READING: MATTHEW 10:40-42**

*When Jesus sends his disciples out as missionaries, he warns them of persecution and hardships they will face. He also promises to reward any who aid his followers and support their ministry.*

[Jesus said to the twelve:] <sup>40</sup>“Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. <sup>41</sup>Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous, <sup>42</sup>and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”  
The word of the Lord... **Thanks be to God.**

### **CHILDREN’S TIME & SERMON**

**HYMN OF THE DAY: “Children of the Heavenly Father” (ELW 781)**

**1 Children of the heav'nly Father**

**safely in his bosom gather;  
nestling bird nor star in heaven  
such a refuge e'er was given.**

**2 God his own doth tend and nourish,  
in his holy courts they flourish.  
From all evil things he spares them,  
in his mighty arms he bears them.**

**3 Neither life nor death shall ever  
from the Lord his children sever;  
unto them his grace he showeth,  
and their sorrows all he knoweth.**

**4 Though he giveth or he taketh,  
God his children ne'er forsaketh;  
his the loving purpose solely  
to preserve them pure and holy.**

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832-1903; tr. Ernst W. Olson, 1870-1958  
Text © 1925 Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:**

**L:** Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray for the church and the needs of the world.

*A brief silence.*

**L:** Faithful God, today we remember with gratitude our ancestors whose vision, sacrifice, and trust in you helped establish this congregation so many years ago. We give thanks for those who cleared the land, built this church, sang these hymns, taught faith to their children, and entrusted their lives to your care. May their witness continue to inspire us as we seek to follow you in our own time. God of grace,

**C:** **Hear our prayer.**

**L:** Bless the children, youth, adults, and elders gathered here. Strengthen the bonds that unite this congregation. Heal old hurts, deepen understanding, and fill our conversations with kindness, laughter, and grace. Help us to

cherish one another and to recognize your presence in each person we meet.  
God of grace,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: As we hear your word today, teach us to live as people who belong to Christ. Turn our hearts away from all that diminishes life and draw us toward lives marked by righteousness, compassion, generosity, and service. Help us to offer even the smallest acts of kindness—a welcome, a helping hand - in your name, trusting that no act of love is ever wasted in your kingdom. God of grace,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Provider God, give your children what they need physically, emotionally, and spiritually. We pray especially for Jerry, Bruce, Cheryl, Chris, Kristy, Ricky, Larry, Joan, Dennis, Lois, Dale, Bev, Gary, Shirley, Joyce, Allison, Becky, Kim, Cadence, Sara, Marg, Leroy, Karen, Pete, Margaret, and Lynnsy. Bless caregivers as they show God's hospitality through their generous service. God of grace,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Bless this family reunion, this congregation, and all who have gathered here today. May our time together strengthen our love for one another and our commitment to you. We ask all this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

*Please stand as you are able*

**\*APOSTLES' CREED: (ELW pg. 217)**

**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.**

**\*SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**P:** The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C:** **And also with you.**

*Please be seated*

**OFFERING**

*We thank you for our gifts of time, talent, and treasure that help this congregation,  
to continue our ministry together, and to make Christ known in our  
communities and the world.*

**OFFERING HYMN: “For the Beauty of the Earth” (ELW 879)**

**1 For the beauty of the earth,  
for the beauty of the skies,  
for the love which from our birth  
over and around us lies:**

*Refrain*

**Christ, our God, to thee we raise  
this our sacrifice of praise.**

**2 For the wonder of each hour  
of the day and of the night,  
hill and vale and tree and flow'r,  
sun and moon and stars of light:**

*Refrain*

**Christ, our God, to thee we raise  
this our sacrifice of praise.**

- 3 For the joy of ear and eye,  
for the heart and mind's delight,  
for the mystic harmony  
linking sense to sound and sight:**

*Refrain*

**Christ, our God, to thee we raise  
this our sacrifice of praise.**

- 4 For the joy of human love,  
brother, sister, parent, child,  
friends on earth and friends above;  
for all gentle thoughts and mild:**

*Refrain*

**Christ, our God, to thee we raise  
this our sacrifice of praise.**

- 5 For each perfect gift of thine,  
peace on earth and joy in heav'n;  
for thyself, best gift divine,  
to our world so freely giv'n:**

*Refrain*

**Christ, our God, to thee we raise  
this our sacrifice of praise.**

Text: Folliot S. Pierpoint, 1835-1917, alt.

*Please stand as you are able*

**\*OFFERTORY PRAYER:**

**P: We present ourselves to you, O God,**

**C: As those who have been brought from death to life, and we offer these gifts in gratitude for that same life of abundance in which you have nurtured us. Use them for the good of your children in all corners of the world, that your generosity may be known to all. Amen.**

**\*THE LORD'S PRAYER: *sung* (CLH 632) (blue hymnal)**

**Our Father, which 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 debts,  
as we forgive our debtors;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

**SENDING**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to our neighbor in need*

**\*BLESSING:**

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer,

✝ one God,

bles, heal, and hold you  
today and always.

**THREE FOLD AMEN**

**\*SENDING HYMN: “*Now We Thank We All Our God*” (ELW 840)**

**1 Now thank we all our God  
with hearts and hands and voices,  
who wondrous things has done,  
in whom this world rejoices;  
who, from our mothers' arms,  
has blest us on our way  
with countless gifts of love,  
and still is ours today.**

**2 Oh, may this bounteous God  
through all our life be near us,  
with ever joyful hearts  
and blessed peace to cheer us,  
and keep us all in grace,  
and guide us when perplexed,**

**and free us from all harm  
in this world and the next.**

**3 All praise and thanks to God  
the Father now be given,  
the Son, and Spirit blest,  
who reign in highest heaven,  
the one eternal God,  
whom earth and heav'n adore;  
for thus it was, is now,  
and shall be evermore.**

Text: Martin Rinkhart, 1586-1649; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878

**\*DISMISSAL:**

**P:** Lord, thank you for this time together. Go with us as we leave and guide us  
in your ways.

**C:** **Thanks be to God!**

**IN OUR PRAYERS**

Jerry Anderson	Kristy Fyhrie
Larry Sather	Joan Burquest
Dennis Rosenquist	Lois Rosenquist
Ricky Hart	Sara Skoglund
Margaret Wehking	
Leroy Olson – father of Becky Arvidson	
Cheryl Farber – mother of Melissa Schlosser	
Rev. Bruce Miller- father of Karin Wagner	
Marg Peterson -friend of the Thoms	
Dale Flemming – father of Laurie Ratajesak	
Gary Borst – friend of the Andersons	
Shirley Nesges – friend of the Thoms	
Bev Lorine – mother of Mandy Arvidson	
Joyce Muyres – friend of the Thoms	
Bev Guse-Ohlrech – friend of the Pedersons	
Allison Dotzler – friend of Kathy Mittag	
Cadence Smith – friend of Mandy Arvidson	
Becky Yttrie – friend of the Townsends	
Kim Casavan – friend of Mandy Arvidson	

Karen Schlosser – mother of Justin Schlosser  
Pete Baugh – brother-in-law of Pr. Ken Bowman  
Chris Clapshaw – step-brother of Mark Ratajesak  
Family and Friends of: Sarah Pomeranz, David Anderson, Katie Jahnke, Colleen Burquest, Doug Tvedt, Alma Robinson, Jerry Pogose, Terry Burns, Wayne Lund, Bruce Carter, Inez Nelson, Gary Willie, Connie Pesta, Kathy Wilkins, and Ivy Christensen

### **THIS WEEK AT ESTHER**

#### **Friday, June 26<sup>th</sup>**

Newsletter Articles due to church office

#### **Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup> – Fifth Sunday after Pentecost**

*Sunday Fellowship Before & After Worship*

10 am – Worship led by Megan Townsend

2 pm – Worship at St. William's

Feed our Starving Children Event at Calvary Lutheran Church in Alexandria.

#### **Monday, July 29<sup>th</sup>**

Feed our Starving Children Event at Calvary Lutheran Church in Alexandria.

#### **Sunday, July 5<sup>th</sup> – Sixth Sunday after Pentecost**

*Sunday Fellowship Before & After Worship*

10 am – Worship with Holy Communion led by SAM Jewel Townsend

11 am – Help in Sanctuary & Entry

2 pm – Worship at St. William's

### **\*NEWS AND NOTES\***

**Thank you for worshipping with us today. We extend a special welcome to the Arvidson Family Reunion and are grateful that you have joined us. May God richly bless you as you gather, celebrating family, fellowship, and the gift of being together.**

**Everything in the Sanctuary and entry will need to be moved out on Sunday, July 5<sup>th</sup> so the new flooring and carpet can be installed. ANY HELP IS APPRECIATED as the pews will need to be moved to the basement.**

**The Pork Chop Feed** is Friday, July 17<sup>th</sup> 4:30 pm – 7:30 pm at Faith in Milona. Sign-up is on the Narthex table for workers and for making pans of bars for the

event. There are also flyers available - please take a few and hang up around the community when you are out and about.

**Ice Cream Social Sunday, July 26<sup>th</sup>!** Worship will be at 10 am with the Ice Cream Social and Country Store from 11-3pm. Please help spread the word by sharing posts about the Ice Cream Social on Facebook.

- **Naomi Circle will make ice cream**
- **Martha Circle will serve**
- **Ruth Circle will do the advertising**



Vanco online giving platform is a great way to set up a scheduled giving plan for even when you cannot make it to church. Scan the QR code, go online to [estherlutheran.com](http://estherlutheran.com), go to the tab “ways to support Esther Lutheran Church” and click on the link <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZP4R> or download the app Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement. Any questions please ask Mandy Arvidson.

**We welcome you to join us for Worship by the Water on Sunday, July 12<sup>th</sup>** at 10 am at the home of Rodney Peterson. Please be sure to bring a lawn chair or blanket to sit on during worship. We invite you to stay for a potluck after worship for a time of food and fellowship. Also, bring a side dish, salad, or dessert to share. Rodney’s address is 13335 County Road 42, Parkers Prairie, MN.

**TURN HUNGER INTO HOPE WITH YOUR OWN TWO HANDS.** Join us for a Feed My Starving Children MobilePack™ event to provide life changing meals where they’re needed most. We welcome volunteers of all abilities, ages 5 and up to help us pack 101,088 meals!

WHAT: FMSC MobilePack™ events offer volunteers a one-of-a-kind experience. You’ll hand-pack rice, soy, dried vegetables and a nutritionally complete blend of vitamins and minerals into bags which are then sealed, boxed, placed on pallets and shipped to incredible partners who distribute the food to children who need it around the world.

DATE: June 28-29, 2026

LOCATION: Calvary Church | 605 Douglas St., Alexandria, MN

**VOLUNTEER:** It's fun to serve alongside people you know! Sign up with your family, coworkers, teammates, or friends. Volunteers of all abilities (ages 5 and up) are welcome, and you do not need to be connected to Calvary to participate. Shifts are 2 hours each.

**DONATE:** Your generosity makes a huge difference in the lives of thousands of children in need around the world! The total cost for this MobilePack™ event is \$30k. Thanks to a generous donor, the next \$7,500 donated will be matched.

Go to <https://give.fmsc.org/campaign/2606-200ea-alexandria-mn-calvary-church/c774158> to volunteer. Please contact Angie at Calvary at [angie@calvaryalex.org](mailto:angie@calvaryalex.org) or call 320-763-5178 with any questions.

**Check out the Esther Calendar on our website to stay up to date on everything happening! Go to [estherlutheran.com](http://estherlutheran.com) and click on “Esther Calendar.”**

*You belong here. We believe that each person has unique gifts, are created in God's image, and is a beloved child of God. We welcome you to join us each week to share in the community of faith at Esther - “Knowing Christ - making Christ known through faith, hope and love”. If you would like to become a member of Esther, please contact Mandy in the church office at 218-338-2171 or [secretary@estherlutheran.net](mailto:secretary@estherlutheran.net) or Jewel Townsend at 320-760-2503 or [jewellht17@gmail.com](mailto:jewellht17@gmail.com).*

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