



Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Esther Lutheran Church, ELCA

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

### Introduction:

The prophet Jeremiah speaks of the incurable wound of his suffering yet finds in God's words the delight of his heart. When Peter doesn't grasp Jesus' words about suffering, Jesus tells the disciples they will find their lives in losing them. Such sacrificial love is described by Paul when he urges us to associate with the lowly and not repay evil with evil. In worship we gather as a community that we might offer ourselves for the sake of our suffering world.

### PRELUDE

### BELL

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

### BEHOLD WEEKLY CHALLENGE QUESTION

### GATHERING

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

*Please stand as you are able*

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP:

P: Jesus calls us to listen to the word, a word which can challenge and distress us.

C: **Set our minds not on human things, but on divine things, O God.**

P: Jesus asks us what we would give in return for our lives.

C: **Set our minds not on human things, but on divine things, O God.**

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: “Lift High the Cross” (ELW 660)**

***Refrain***

**Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim  
till all the world adore his sacred name.**

**1 Come, Christians, follow where our captain trod,  
our king victorious, Christ, the Son of God.**

***Refrain***

**Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim  
till all the world adore his sacred name.**

**2 All newborn servants of the Crucified  
bear on their brows the seal of him who died.**

***Refrain***

**Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim  
till all the world adore his sacred name.**

- 3 O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,  
as thou hast promised, draw us all to thee.**

***Refrain***

**Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim  
till all the world adore his sacred name.**

- 4 So shall our song of triumph ever be:  
praise to the Crucified for victory!**

***Refrain***

**Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim  
till all the world adore his sacred name.**

Text: George W. Kitchin, 1827-1912; rev. Michael R. Newbolt, 1874-1956  
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**\*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)**

**Kyrie eleison: Lord, have mercy.**  
**Christe eleison: Christ, have mercy.**  
**Kyrie eleison: Lord, have mercy.**

**\*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: **We thank you for your Son, who chose the path of suffering for the sake of the world. Humble us by his example, point us to the path of obedience, and give us strength to follow your commands, 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 15:15-21**

*Jeremiah's delight in the word of the Lord is contradicted by the heaviness of God's hand upon him and God's seeming unfaithfulness. God's tough love to Jeremiah says that if he repents, he will be allowed to continue in his strenuous ministry. Jeremiah is strengthened by the simple words, "I am with you."*

<sup>15</sup>O Lord, you know; remember me and visit me, and bring down retribution for me on my persecutors. In your forbearance do not take me away; know that on your account I suffer insult. <sup>16</sup>Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts. <sup>17</sup>I did not sit in the company of merrymakers, nor did I rejoice; under the weight of your hand I sat alone, for you had filled me with indignation. <sup>18</sup>Why is my pain unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Truly, you are to me like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail. <sup>19</sup>Therefore thus says the Lord: If you turn back, I will take you back, and you shall stand before me. If you utter what is precious and not what is worthless, you shall serve as my mouth. It is they who will turn to you, not you who will turn to them. <sup>20</sup>And I will make you to this people a fortified wall of bronze; they will fight against you, but they shall not prevail over you, for I am with you to save you and deliver you, says the Lord. <sup>21</sup>I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless. Here ends the first reading.

**PSALM 26:1-8 ~ Congregation reads the *bold***

*Your love is before my eyes; I have walked faithfully with you. (Ps. 26:3)*

<sup>1</sup>Give judgment for me, O Lord, for I have lived with integrity; I have trusted in the Lord and have not faltered.

<sup>2</sup>**Test me, O Lord, and try me; examine my heart and my mind.**

<sup>3</sup>For your steadfast love is before my eyes; I have walked faithfully with you.

<sup>4</sup>**I have not sat with the worthless, nor do I consort with the deceitful.**

<sup>5</sup>I have hated the company of evildoers; I will not sit down with the wicked.

<sup>6</sup>**I will wash my hands in innocence, O Lord, that I may go in procession round your altar,**

<sup>7</sup>singing aloud a song of thanksgiving and recounting all your wonderful deeds.

<sup>8</sup>**Lord, I love the house in which you dwell and the place where your glory abides.**

#### **SECOND READING: ROMANS 12:9-21**

*Paul presents benchmarks for faithful relationships with Christians and non-Christians. Love is the unflagging standard of our behavior. When we encounter evil, we do not resort to its tactics but seek to overcome it with good. While Christians cannot control the actions and attitudes of others, we seek to live at peace with all people.*

<sup>9</sup>Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; <sup>10</sup>love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. <sup>11</sup>Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. <sup>13</sup>Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers. <sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. <sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. <sup>19</sup>Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says

the Lord.” <sup>20</sup>Instead, “if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink, for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.” <sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. 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 16:21-28**

*After Peter confesses that Jesus is “the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (16:16), Jesus reveals the ultimate purpose of his ministry. These words prove hard to accept, even for a disciple whom Jesus has called a “rock.”*

<sup>21</sup>From that time on, [after Peter confessed that Jesus was the Messiah,] Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised. <sup>22</sup>And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” <sup>23</sup>But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me, for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.” <sup>24</sup>Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup>For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. <sup>26</sup>For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life? <sup>27</sup>“For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. <sup>28</sup>Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.” The word of the Lord...**Thanks be to God.**

**CHILDREN’S TIME**

**SERMON: “Service, Sacrifice, and Light for the Journey”**

**HYMN OF THE DAY: "Jesus Calls Us; o'er the Tumult" (ELW 696)**

- 1 Jesus calls us; o'er the tumult  
of our life's wild, restless sea,  
day by day his clear voice sounding,  
saying, "Christian, follow me":**
- 2 As of old Saint Andrew heard it  
by the Galilean lake,  
turned from home and toil and kindred,  
leaving all for Jesus' sake.**
- 3 Jesus calls us from the worship  
of the vain world's golden store,  
from each idol that would keep us,  
saying, "Christian, love me more."**
- 4 In our joys and in our sorrows,  
days of toil and hours of ease,  
still he calls, in cares and pleasures,  
"Christian, love me more than these."**
- 5 Jesus calls us! By your mercy,  
Savior, may we hear your call,  
give our hearts to your obedience,  
serve and love you best of all.**

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818-1895

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:**

- L:** With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

***A brief silence.***

- L:** For the church in every land, that its mission and ministry is anchored in the love of Christ. When threats or challenges arise, teach us to take up our cross and follow you in faith. Merciful God,

**C: Receive our prayer.**

L: For the well-being of your creation, that all that lives and grows on the earth may thrive. Bring relief to areas ravaged by droughts, floods, fires, storms, and other disasters. Merciful God,

**C: Receive our prayer.**

L: For all those in need, that they be satisfied. Ensure all your children have safe access to food, water, shelter, and medical care. Bring healing to all who bear wounds in body, mind, and spirit especially Jerry, Bruce, Cheryl, Chris, Kristy, Ricky, Larry, Joan, Dennis, Lois, Bev, Gary, Shirley, Joyce, Allison, Becky, Kim, Cadence, Sara, Marg, Karen, Pete, and Lynnsy.. Merciful God,

**C: Receive our prayer.**

L: For the congregation gathered here to serve you, that they remain strong in faith and united in purpose. Guide our committees, study groups, and other meetings toward honesty and humility, always seeking genuine love. Merciful God,

**C: Receive our prayer.**

L: For the faithful departed, that their witness continues to strengthen and guide the church. Renew our hope in your promises in this life and the life to come. Merciful God,

**C: Receive our prayer.**

L: Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**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: “Sing with All the Saints in Glory” vs. 1 (ELW 426)**

**1 Sing with all the saints in glory,  
sing the resurrection song!  
Death and sorrow, earth's dark story,  
to the former days belong.  
All around the clouds are breaking,  
soon the storms of time shall cease;  
in God's likeness we awaken,  
knowing everlasting peace.**

*Please stand as you are able*

**\*OFFERTORY PRAYER:**

P: God, who gave all your yourself for the sake of your beloved creation,

C: **We offer these gifts out of what you have first given us, in gratitude and wonder. May they, in turn, bring fullness and gratitude to others, so that all might know of your incomprehensible love. Amen.**

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

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,

bless, heal, and hold you  
today and always.

**THREE FOLD AMEN**

**\*SENDING HYMN: “*I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light*” (ELW 815)**

1 I want to walk as a child of the light.  
I want to follow Jesus.  
God set the stars to give light to the world.  
The star of my life is Jesus.

***Refrain***

In him there is no darkness at all.  
The night and the day are both alike.  
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.  
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

- 2 I want to see the brightness of God.  
I want to look at Jesus.  
Clear Sun of righteousness, shine on my path,  
and show me the way to the Father.

***Refrain***

In him there is no darkness at all.  
The night and the day are both alike.  
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.  
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

- 3 I'm looking for the coming of Christ.  
I want to be with Jesus.  
When we have run with patience the race,  
we shall know the joy of Jesus.

***Refrain***

In him there is no darkness at all.  
The night and the day are both alike.  
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.  
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

Text: Kathleen Thomerson, b. 1934  
Text © 1970, 1975 Celebration.

**\*DISMISSAL:**

P: Go in peace, serve the Lord, and may his blessings be upon you this week.  
C: Thanks be to God!

**IN OUR PRAYERS**

Jerry Anderson

Kristy Fyhrie

Larry Sather                      Joan Burquest  
Dennis Rosenquist              Lois Rosenquist  
Ricky Hart                      Sara Skoglund  
Cheryl Farber – mother of Melissa Schlosser  
Rev. Bruce Miller- father of Karin Wagner  
Marg Peterson -friend of the Thoms  
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: Katie Jahnke, Colleen Burquest, Doug Tvedt,  
Jerry Pogose, Terry Burns, Bruce Carter, Gary Willie, Connie Pesta,  
Kathy Wilkins, Ivy Christensen, Jim Schlosser, Leroy Olson, Dale  
Flemming, Wally Schlosser, and Carter Stockert

### **THIS WEEK AT ESTHER**

#### **Sunday, August 30<sup>th</sup> – Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

*Sunday Fellowship Before and After Worship*

10 am – Worship led by Pastor Preston

2 pm – Worship at St. William's

#### **Sunday, September 6<sup>th</sup> - Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

*Sunday Fellowship Before and After Worship*

10 am – Worship with Holy Communion led by Pastor Preston

2 pm – Worship at St. William's

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

**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."**

**Ice Cream Still Available!** If you missed the Ice Cream Social, you are in luck! We still have individual cups of ice cream available in the basement kitchen freezer. Feel free to help yourself and place your donation in the box provided. Suggested donations: \$2.50 per cup or 5 cups for \$10.

**You are invited to the Sixth Annual 2026 Remembrance Day Walks by Humble Hearts Grief Support Services** on Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup> at Lake Brophy Park in Alexandria, MN. There is also a walk in Sleepy Eye, MN on Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup>. 12 pm – 1 pm is registration, meal, and shopping, 1 pm- 2 pm is the Remembrance Walk, and 2 pm – 3:30 is the Inspirational Program and Recognition of Loved Ones (Alexandria only – dove release).



**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 in the weekly "Behold the New Has Come" devotions** available on our website [estherlutheran.com](http://estherlutheran.com) on the "Behold" tab. Devotions are posted to the website and emailed out each Monday. If you are not currently on the email list and want to be, please notify Mandy in the office. Each weekly devotion includes a challenge for the week. This past week's challenge is:

Do you see the light of Christ burning in those around you? Do you recognize that light, and tell others when it is revealed? How can we be better light revealers for the communities that we serve and share God's Word in? We are called to be like

Jesus in our work and our play. We are children of the light of Christ. Show us the way, Lord, light our paths.

We hope these devotions and weekly challenges will inspire conversations and stories that we can share with one another as, together, we grow in faith through this initiative.

**Sunday School** begins on Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>! We welcome all children ages 3 through 6th grade to join us.

**During worship on September 13<sup>th</sup>, we will also celebrate the start of the school year with a Back-to-School Blessing and Prayer**, followed by a Backpack Blessing during the Children's Sermon. We hope you'll bring your backpacks and join us for this special day!

**Confirmation classes will begin again in September with a Get-to-Know-You Potluck and Planning Night** on Wednesday, September 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm. Students and their parents are invited to attend. We welcome everyone from 7th grade through adults to join the class, whether you are preparing for confirmation, have already been confirmed, or would simply like a refresher on the faith. For more information or to sign up, please contact Jewel Townsend.

**38<sup>th</sup> Annual NW MN SWO Convention** will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church in Crookston, MN on September 18-19<sup>th</sup>.

**Fall Conference Gatherings:** Conference 5: October 15<sup>th</sup> at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Moorhead, MN and Conference 8 at Grace Lutheran in Brandon, MN.

*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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