

**Sept. 17, 2023**  
**Sixteenth**  
**Sunday after**  
**Pentecost**

**Our Mission**

As Children of God, we invite all people to journey with us as we worship, grow in faith and serve in Jesus' name.



**PRELUDE**

**BELLS**

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP** (Psalm 113:1-2, 6, 8, 13)

Bless the Lord, O my soul,

**And all that is within me bless God's holy name.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul,

**And do not forget all that God has done.**

The Lord works vindication and justice

**For all who are oppressed.**

The Lord is merciful and gracious,

**Slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.**

As a parent has compassion for their children,

**So God has compassion for those who are in awe of the Creator.**

**PRAYER OF BROKENNESS/CONFESSION**

Let us Pray: **Merciful God, we confess we are not good at practicing mercy. We would rather cultivate anger than compassion. We would rather hold grudges than practice forgiveness. We would rather judge others than repent and turn to You. We would rather let ourselves off the hook and condemn others for their actions. You are the Almighty One, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. We know that**

**You continue to call our names, to call us back to You, to show us the way, and to forgive us. We know that You sent Your Son Jesus Christ to lead us into the way of forgiveness, grace, and mercy. Your Son laid down his life for us, so that we might know that nothing could separate us from Your love, not even our own sins. Guide us into Your ways of forgiveness, mercy, love, and grace. In the name of Christ, who lives again for us, we pray. Amen.**

### **BLESSING/ASSURANCE**

You are God's beloved child. You were formed by the Creator and filled with God's compassion and love. We all fall short and go astray, but know that God is always calling you back, ready to welcome you with open arms. There is nothing you can do that will stop God from loving you. There is nowhere you can go where God won't find you. God loves you madly. Open your hearts to God's transformative love in your lives, and know God's love, grace, and peace, are with you, now and always. Go and share this good news. **Amen.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray...**God of all seasons, as we near the Solstice we recognize the balance shifting in the world. We move from summer to autumn in the north, and from winter into spring in the south. As the earth is blanketed with greenery and flowers in spring, moving north into the golds and crimsons and oranges of autumn, may we be awakened to the new things You are doing all around us. May we take a moment to appreciate the earth, and how You bring all things in due season. In Your name, Great Creator, we pray. Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG** *(Come, Now is the Time to Worship) (Pg. 3 in bulletin)*



## **SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12**

<sup>1</sup>Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. <sup>2</sup>Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. <sup>3</sup>Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. <sup>4</sup>Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. <sup>5</sup>Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. <sup>6</sup>Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. <sup>7</sup>We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. <sup>8</sup>If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. <sup>9</sup>For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. <sup>10</sup>Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. <sup>11</sup>For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." <sup>12</sup>So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## **TIME WITH THE CHILDREN – Bible presentation for FLC**

### **INTALLATION OF SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADERS (BYGLAND)**

**The following people have been *volunteered to lead childrens Sunday School*. We give thanks for their willingness to serve. In baptism we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God; we rejoice now that these *sisters and brothers* will lead us in our common life and our mutual mission as a congregation.**

You have been *set aside* to positions of leadership and trust and education in this congregation. You are to be faithful in your specific area of serving, that the Spirit who empowers you may be glorified. You are to be examples of faith active in love, fostering peace, harmony, and mutual understanding in this congregation. On behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ, I ask you: Will you accept and faithfully carry out the duties of the offices to which you have volunteered?

**I will, and I ask God to help me.**

People of God, I ask you: Will you support these volunteers, and will you share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all who are baptized?

**We will, and we ask God to help us.**

I now declare you installed as *teachers and leaders* of this congregation. Almighty God bless you, and direct your days and your deeds in peace, that you may be faithful servants of Christ. **Amen.**

**GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>21</sup>Peter came and said to [Jesus], “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?”

<sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. <sup>23</sup>“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; <sup>25</sup>and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup>So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ <sup>27</sup>And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ <sup>29</sup>Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ <sup>30</sup>But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup>Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ <sup>34</sup>And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup>So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

**HYMN OF THE DAY** *Where Charity and Love Prevail (ELW #359)*  
(VV. 1, 2, 5)

## RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS - Bygland

P: Dear friends, we give thanks for the gift of baptism and for *these people*, one with us in the body of Christ, Allen Moe & Myron Wardner, whom we welcome as new *members* into the life and ministry of this congregation of Bygland Church.

### APOSTLES CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**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**

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

**OFFERING SONG** *There is a Redeemer* (Fisher) Song by Heidi Reitmeier

**COMMUNION SONG** *Sanctuary* (Lord, Prepare Me) (Sing twice)

Lord, pre - pare me to be a sanc - tu - ar - y, pure and  
ho - ly, tried and true. With thanks - giv - ing,  
I'll be a liv - ing sanc - tu - ar - y for you.

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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**

## **DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION**

### **SENDING**

#### **BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you. **Amen.**

**SENDING SONG** *We Walk by Faith (ELW #635) (VV. 1, 2, 5)*

#### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

#### **POSTLUDE**

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- We welcome BLC new members Allen Moe and Myron Wardner
- FLC Bible presentation: Preschool – Briella Schepers  
3<sup>rd</sup> Grade – Braison Ibarra, Harley Moulds & Emalee Pyatte
- Today following worship Pastor Gretchen will attend the Sept. Fall Theological Conference through the 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Family Fellowship following worship at BLC to welcome new members.
- Tue, Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> **NO** stretch & Pray
- Wed, Sept 20<sup>th</sup> 9:00 AM FLC WELCA Bible Study – Pastor Gretchen is facilitating.  
6:15 PM Confirmation orientation for all grades & Parents at FLC  
7:30 PM Fisher council
- Thurs. Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> 6:30 AM AA at FLC  
10-12 Bygland office hours  
**NO** Stretch & Pray  
5-7 PM Synod Road Trip
- Fri. Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup> Pastors Day off
- Sat. Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> BLC Middle & High School Youth Bike & Hike Event.
- Sun. Sept. 24<sup>th</sup> 9:00 AM Worship at Bygland – Bible Sunday for Preschool – Reese Brundin, Bexley Boushee and Logan Wurden.  
3<sup>rd</sup> Grade – Jackson Arnold  
10:00 AM Sunday school for BLC & FLC  
11:00 AM Worship at Fisher