
BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

21590 State Highway 47, Isle, MN 56342

March 1st, 2026

9:00 a.m.



the good news is..

great love for
God & neighbor

We are a community that is passionate about sharing the love of Jesus Christ, and we provide as many opportunities as we can to help everyone grow spiritually and in loving service to the community and the world.

*We're glad you're here. We are a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and celebrate the work we're able to do together.
(to learn more about the ELCA visit www.elca.org).*

*Those joining worship online, whether live or later in the week, are invited to prepare their worship space by creating a home altar. You might include meaningful linens, candles, a cross, enough bread or crackers and wine or juice for everyone at your table, and anything that helps you engage more fully in worship.
This altar becomes a gathering place for prayers, songs, communion, and a shared sense of God's presence in your home.*

✝ **GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE** ✝

~ ***The gathering responds together with texts in bold print*** ~

WELCOME

Good morning, and welcome to worship. On this second Sunday in Lent, we gather around a story of unexpected and extravagant love. At a dinner table with Jesus, a woman from the city offers a tender, wholehearted act of devotion. While others question her presence, Jesus sees what matters most, a love poured out freely and fully. Today we remember that the good news is great love for God and neighbor. Love for God is lived through the care we extend to one another, especially to those who are often overlooked or set aside. In every act of compassion, every gesture of mercy, love takes shape among us. As we worship, may our hearts be opened again to receive God's great love and to share that love generously in the world.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Tell me something good!

God loves you more than you could imagine.

Tell me something good!

God loves all of creation more than you could imagine.

Tell me something good!

God's love meets us in this service of worship. We are not alone.

This is good news indeed!

Let us worship our compassionate God.

LIFE TOGETHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Find the full list of Life Together announcements near the end of the bulletin.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Family of faith, we long to love others as God loves us,
but that work is easier said than done. We lose our way. We become distracted.
We grow fearful. We need God's grace. Fortunately for us,
God's grace is freely and abundantly given.
So join me in the Prayer of Confession. Join me in being transformed.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, **did we see you hungry and give you something to eat?**

Did we see you thirsty and give you something to drink?

Did we see you alone and offer you compassion?

Or did we cross the street? Did we avert our eyes?

Did we come up with every excuse in the book?

**God, we long to be people who love our neighbors
with the same overwhelming love that you have for them.**

But we must admit, we have a long way to go.

**Forgive us for the times when we let bias,
scarcity, or fear get in the way of love.**

Wash us clean and give us the courage to try again.

With hope for a better tomorrow we pray, amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Faith family, even when we act with judgment,
even when we are guided by fear,
even when we turn our back on a neighbor in need,
God does not turn God's back on us.

So join me in this good-news declaration:

We are seen. We are forgiven.

We are invited to try again.

Thanks be to God for this unending love.

Take My Life, That I May Be

ELW 685



1 Take my life, that I may be con - se - crat - ed, Lord, to thee;
2 Take my hands and let them move at the im - pulse of thy love;
3 Take my voice and let me sing al - ways, on - ly, for my King;
4 Take my sil - ver and my gold, not a mite would I with - hold;



take my mo - ments and my days; let them flow in cease - less praise.
take my feet and let them be swift and beau - ti - ful for thee.
take my lips and let them be filled with mes - sag - es from thee.
take my in - tel - lect, and use ev - 'ry pow'r as thou shalt choose.

5 Take my will and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.

6 Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store;
take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879, alt.
Music: PAIMOS, William H. Havergal, 1793–1870

GREETING

The immeasurable grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the rich mercy and love of God, and the unity of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Good news God, **speak louder than the news updates. Speak louder than our mental distractions. Speak louder than our anger and louder than our fear. God, speak loudly to us today, because we long to hear your good news once more. With hope we pray, amen.**

✠ HEARING GOD'S WORD ✠

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Luke 7:36-50, Matthew 25:25-40

The holy gospel according to Luke

These are the stories of grace flowing down. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

³⁶One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and when he went into the Pharisee's house he reclined to dine. ³⁷And a woman in the city who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. ³⁸She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair, kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment. ³⁹Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him, that she is a sinner." ⁴⁰Jesus spoke up and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Teacher," he replied, "speak." ⁴¹"A certain moneylender had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴²When they could not pay, he canceled the debts for both of them. Now which

of them will love him more?" ⁴³ Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt." And Jesus said to him, "You have judged rightly." ⁴⁴ Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. ⁴⁶ You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. ⁴⁷ Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven loves little." ⁴⁸ Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." ⁴⁹ But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" ⁵⁰ But he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

The holy gospel according to Matthew

²⁵ so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' ²⁶ But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not scatter? ²⁷ Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸ So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹ For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰ As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³ and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴ Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸ And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹ And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' ⁴⁰ And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.'

These are the stories of grace that cover us. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

Reverend Deb Hanson-Carlson

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

ELW 588



1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy, like the wide - ness of the sea;
2 There is wel - come for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;
3 For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;
4 'Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice which is more than lib - er - ty.
there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing in his blood.
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.
great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in heav'n.
There is grace e - nough for thou - sands of new worlds as great as this;
But we make this love too nar - row by false lim - its of our own;
Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,



There is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
there is room for fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.
and we mag - ni - fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.
and our lives will be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, alt.
Music: LORD, REVIVE US, North American, 19th cent.

✠ SHARING & RECEIVING THE GIFTS OF GOD ✠

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.
It sounds like welcome and feels like home.
It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy.
It sounds like love and feels like a seat at the table,
so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.
I have seen it alive in the world.**

**And even when my heart aches, even when wars rage,
even when mercy feels out of reach, I remember the one who
welcomed the children and led with nonviolence.
I remember the one who cared for the vulnerable
and inspired those around him.
I remember that the good news really is good news,
for I have seen it alive in the world. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Jesus of Nazareth, your love for this world is so strong.
It's like a jar of perfume broken in a crowded room—
it permeates everything it touches.

God, we long to love like that.

**We long to love you with the same extravagant abundance
that the woman with the alabaster jar displayed.**

However, we often get in our own way. Holy God, today we pray:
when it comes to our neighbors,

give us eyes to see as you see. Give us hands to serve as you serve.

Give us arms to hold. Give us feet to journey alongside.

Give us hearts of compassion, just like yours.

In particular, today we pray for. . .

The presiding minister offers prayers for our community and for the needs of the world.

God, our love does not stop with our neighbor. We also long to love you.

So when we pass a field of purple, remind us to say thank you.

When we hear the sound of laughter, remind us that there is good in this world.

When music or birdsong moves our soul,

remind us that you are always present with us.

In all of these moments, turn our hearts toward you.

May we be the next ones to love boldly, to sing praise, to say thank you.

**Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ,
our strength and salvation. Amen.**

PEACE

May Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, fill you with unconditional love,
mend you with mercy, and grant you perfect peace. **And also with you.**

*We are changed by Christ's peace and now we have the holy opportunity
to extend that peace to others.*

OFFERING

Giving is an act of worship our response to God's goodness and grace.

*Your gifts support the ministry of Bethesda Lutheran Church and extend God's love
into the world. During this time the table is set.*

For the healing of this world, let us give our tithes and offerings.

Ways to Give:

- Give electronically through Vanco Services.
- Use the giving app by scanning the QR code.
- Recurring or one-time online options <https://app.autobooks.co/pay/bethesda-lutheran-church-of-malmo>



Thank you for your faithful and generous support.

Today is Blessing Box Sunday. Today's special offering will support the Neighbor to Neighbor Fund. Your gifts today will be shared both with these partner synods and within our own synod as together we embody Christ's call to love our neighbors in tangible ways. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERING PRAYER

O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. In every season you speak good news. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Gather us at this table of grace.

Through these gifts of bread and wine, tell us again the good news of Jesus, his life poured out for the world, his love alive among us, his promise renewing all things. Shape us to carry this good news into our days, so that what we receive here may be lived and shared beyond these walls. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

The presiding minister leads the words of institution. The gathering responds:

Remembering his love for us on the way, at the table, and to the end

We proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

The presiding minister continues. The gathering responds:

With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Grounded in the good news of God's abundant mercy, we pray. **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

Holy Communion is a gift of grace, where we receive the presence of Jesus in bread and wine and are reminded that we are deeply loved. All who hunger for mercy and hope are welcome at this feast. Jesus is the host, and the invitation is wide. Even across time and space, God is present in these gifts, and we, the community, are present to one another.

Come to the table. Come and receive the good news made tangible

Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

Bread for the journey, grace for your life, love that sustains the world.

COMMUNION VIDEO "The More I Seek You"

(Chapel Sessions) feat. Jessie Harris | Gateway Worship
https://youtu.be/mEWD_r_bfp60?si=Ywm1mm5WpgIxPRHf

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. Let us pray. God of our salvation, **we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's Body in the world, bearing witness to your love for creation through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

✠ SENDING ✠

BLESSING

As you leave this place, when you meet anger, speak with love.
When you meet fear, speak with hope. When you meet pain, speak with gentleness.
But no matter what, speak this good news.
For the good news of the gospel is love and justice for all.
It is joy that surprises, and nonviolence that transforms.
May the triune God ✠ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love

ELW 708

Refrain



Je - su, Je - su, fill us with your love, show



us how to serve the neigh-bors we have from you.



1 Kneels at the feet of his friends, si - lent - ly wash - es their feet,
2 Neigh-bors are wealth-y and poor, var - ied in col - or and race,
3 These are the ones we will serve, these are the ones we will love;
4 Kneel at the feet of our friends, si - lent - ly wash - ing their feet:



Refrain

mas - ter who acts as a slave to them.
neigh-bors are near - by and far a - way.
all these are neigh - bors to us and you.
this is the way we will live with you.

Text: Tom Colvin, 1925–2000, alt.
Music: CHEREPONI, Ghanaian folk tune, adapt. Tom Colvin
Text and music © 1969 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

DISMISSAL

The good news of the gospel is alive in the world, so go forth speaking.
For if you won't, then who will? **Thanks be to God for this good, good news.**

*We're so glad you joined us for worship today.
Wherever life finds you, know that this community welcomes you with open hearts.*

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LIFE TOGETHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Life together announcements reflect the shared life of our congregation by highlighting upcoming events, service opportunities, and ways we continue to grow in faith together.

We invite you to read through what's ahead and participate as you are able. Your presence matters.

PRAYER & CARE LIST Jim Christensen, Sherry Whipple

As a community of faith, we are committed to holding one another in prayer and care.

We invite you to pray for those listed here and offer support as you are able.

To request prayers for yourself or someone else (with their permission).

Please get in touch with the church office.

WELCOME Friends in Christ, we're glad you're here. Your presence is a gift to this community. If you would like us to be in touch or want to learn more about Bethesda, you're welcome to share your name in the friendship/welcome notebook.

CHILDREN WELCOME Children are a gift we celebrate and are welcome at Holy Communion. We trust that worship belongs to people of all ages. A quieter, unstaffed nursery is available through the double doors to the left when exiting the sanctuary. Children's bulletins and activity bags are available in the narthex.

WELCOME NOTEBOOK Please take a moment to sign the friendship notebook in the black folder at the end of your pew. Passing it along is a simple act of hospitality that helps us learn one another's names and extend the warmth of Christ's welcome to all.

NAME TAGS Help your neighbors, and your pastor, remember your name! Name tags make it easier to connect and grow together in community. Sticker name tags are available near the guest book at the main entrance.

PASTORAL CARE Caring for one another is part of who we are. If you are hospitalized or going through a difficult time, please let Pastor Christina or one of our parish nurses know. We would be honored to support you.

COFFEE HOSPITALITY Coffee and conversation are part of how we care for one another. If you'd like to help serve coffee or share a treat, your presence makes a difference. Sign-up information is available, and contributions for the freezer are always welcome.

LECTORS Thank you to those who share their voices in the reading of Scripture. Newly updated readings for the upcoming weeks are available on the table in the narthex.

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS The ministry of serving Holy Communion is shared by many. If you are interested in serving at the table, Pastor Christina would love to visit with you. Please contact the church office to begin the conversation.

COME SING WITH US If you enjoy singing, consider joining the choir as we begin again on April 8. Whether you've sung for years or simply love music, there is a place for you. Choir is a joyful way to participate in worship, build community, and share in the gift of song together. We would be delighted to welcome your voice. All Voices Welcome.

SEASONS OF LIFE Join us Wednesday, March 11, from 11:00 am–12:00 pm for a free, informative seminar on hospice care. Paige Harwig, LPN and Hospice Care Consultant with Moments Hospice, will offer compassionate guidance and practical insight into hospice services and support for individuals and families. All are welcome. Stay for our midweek Lenten worship at noon, followed by a potluck lunch and fellowship. Virtual attendance is available. Please email the church office to

receive the livestream link.

LENTEN WORSHIP & FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES

- **Wednesday Midweek Lenten Worship at Noon** (following Ash Wednesday) Wednesdays, February 25th through March 25th Our worship will be guided by the Holden Evening Prayer. Potluck lunch to follow. The noon worship will be live-streamed each week.
- **Lenten Devotional Booklets**
Devotional booklets and Daily Devotional Cards are available. These weekly devotions follow the scriptures of the *Tell Me Something Good* series through Easter Sunday and include commentary, poetry, visual art, hymns, written reflections, and prayer and conversation prompts.

MILLE LACS AREA LENTEN CANTATA "Come to the Cross and Remember"

Friday, April 3rd at 7:30 pm. at Faith Lutheran Church, 220 E Lake St, Isle, MN 56342
A free will offering will support the Isle Area Food Shelf.

CRAFT SWAP & SUPPLY DRIVE Spring is the perfect time to organize and declutter those craft bins! Consider donating your gently used art and craft supplies to our upcoming Craft Swap and Supply Drive. Items will be collected the week before the event. On April 11, 9:00 am - Noon, join us for a community gathering where creativity meets generosity, share what you no longer need, and discover new-to-you supplies to inspire your next project.

Women of the ELCA HEARTLAND CONFERENCE SPRING GATHERING

"*Steeped in Kindness*" Saturday, April 18, 2026 | 8:30 am – 1:00 pm

Bethesda Lutheran Church of Malmo. All are warmly invited to a morning of fellowship, worship, and joy. Guest speaker: Jason Kempthorne from Salem West. Cost: \$12 (includes lunch). Bring a friend and join us for a meaningful and uplifting time together.

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD LAST WEEK

Sunday, February 22nd, In person:54 Online:32

THIS WEEK AT BETHESDA

Monday, March 2nd

11:30 am Pinochle

7:00 pm AA/Alanon

Tuesday, March 3rd

9:00 am Chair Yoga

Wednesday, March 4th

9:00 am Women's Bible Study

12:00 pm Holden Evening Prayer Service, Potluck following

Thursday, March 5th

8:00 am ROMEOS (Men's fellowship & study)

9:15 am Chair Yoga

Sunday, March 8th, Third Sunday in Lent

9:00 am Worship with Holy Communion

Bethesda Lutheran Church blcmalmo.org

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A member congregation of the NE MN Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Ministers: All People of Bethesda Lutheran Church

Pastoral Ministries: Reverend Christina Kadelbach

blc.reverend@gmail.com 218-213-6731

Church Secretary: Mary Braun

Presiding Minister: Pastor Deb Hanson-Carlson

Music & Sound Technician: Jim Christensen

Parish Nurses: Darlene Christensen, RN, Kathy Berland RN ANP

Prayer Chain Contacts: Char Berg 320-684-2102 or

Darlene Christensen 320-279-0097

March Altar Care: Elsa Carlson, Kat Carlson

Ushers: Mark & Mary Vukelich

Greeters: Bob & Kat Carlson

Lector: Merrily Jones

Hospitality: Rocky & Cindy VanVickle

Serving on March 8th, Third Sunday in Lent

Ushers: Barry & Donna Ansell

Greeters: Mary Braun & Linda Gommer

Lector: Karen Carron

Hospitality:

Praise Choir: Jim & Darlene Christensen, Sheila Penoyer, Sherry Whipple

Presiding Pastor: Pastor Dan Holm