Bethesda Episcopal Church

The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost **6 September 2026**

8.00 Holy Communion

The order of service is printed on the laminated card.
The Reading, Gospel, and Prayers of the People may be found below.

10.00 Sung Eucharist

Music

All stand as the ministers enter. The Celebrant says

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Celebrant introduces the Confession.

Dear friends in Christ, God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy, welcoming sinners and inviting them to his table. Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

All kneel. Silence is kept. The Celebrant begins the Confession, saying,

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against thee
and against our neighbor,
in thought, and word, and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are heartily sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ, who died for us,
forgive us all that is past,
and grant that we may serve thee in newness of life,
to the glory of thy name.
Amen.

The Celebrant says the Absolution.

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

All stand.

The Opening Hymn #410 *From the Hymnal 1982*

Remain standing for the Collect of the Day.

The Lord be with you. **And with thy spirit.**

Let us pray. Grant us, O Lord, we pray thee, to trust in thee with all our heart; seeing that, as thou dost alway resist the proud who confide in their own strength, so thou dost not forsake those who make their boast of thy mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**.

All sit.

The Reading *Ezekiel 33.7-11*

A reading from the Book of the prophet, Ezekiel.

You, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" Say to them, As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

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

All stand.

The Alleluia

Show me your ways, O Lord: and teach me your statutes. **Alleluia.**

Remain standing.

The Holy Gospel *Matthew 18.15-20*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Matthew.
Glory be to thee, O Lord.

Jesus said, "If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But

if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

The Sermon *Starrla Lares*

All stand.

The Nicene Creed *Said by all*

I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible;
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God;
begotten, not made;
being of one substance with the Father;
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation
came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered and was buried:
and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father;
and he shall come again, with glory,
to judge both the quick and the dead;
whose kingdom shall have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord, and Giver of Life,
who proceedeth from the Father and the Son;
who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified;
who spake by the Prophets.
And I believe one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church;
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins;
and I look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

All kneel.

The Prayers of the People

In our prayers for the Church, we pray this week for the Anglican Province of Alexandria; and in the Albany Diocese, for Jeremiah, our bishop, and the people of St. Mary's, Lake Luzerne.

We ask God's blessing on those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week; and those whose year's mind falls at this time.

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord, saying, Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the Holy Church of God, and for the unity of all peoples, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the clergy and people of our diocese as they gather for the annual Convention this week, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For our country, our President, and for good government in our land, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For this city of Saratoga Springs, for every city and community, and for those who live in them, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who travel at this time, and for their safety, let us pray to the Lord**. Lord, have mercy.**

For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering, especially Patti, Norma, Jerilyn, and Paula, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord**. Lord, have mercy.**

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, and for all the departed, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

Celebrant: O God, help us to see ourselves in the light of thy holiness, that we may turn from sin, receive thy grace and forgiveness, and learn to love and serve thee with our whole heart; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

All stand. At the exchange of the Peace, you may greet those around you in the name of the Lord.

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And with thy spirit.**

During the hymn, a collection is taken to support the work and ministry of Bethesda Church.

Hymn at the Offertory #674 *From the Hymnal 1982*

Remain standing.

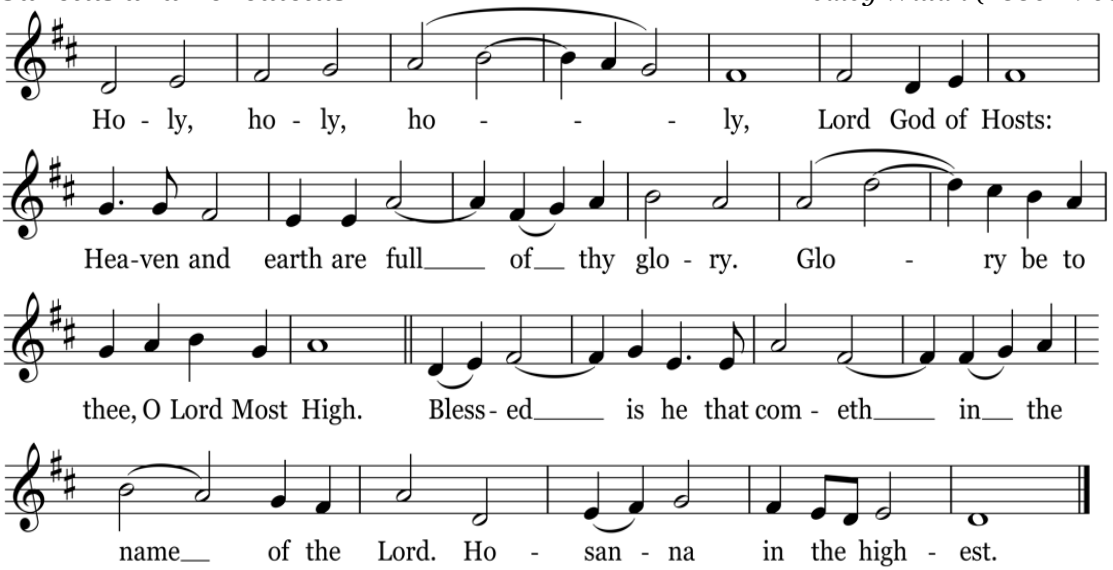
The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up unto the Lord.
Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.
It is meet and right so to do.

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God. Creator of the light and source of life, who hast made us in thine image, and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee and saying,

Sanctus and Benedictus

Healey Willan (1880-1968)



All kneel. The Celebrant says the Eucharistic Prayer printed on p. 341 of the Book of Common Prayer.

The prayer concludes … by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Fraction

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Prayer of Humble Access

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

The Agnus Dei *The text and music may be found on page **S–158** of the Hymnal.*

Communion is distributed at the altar rail. Please move at the direction of the ushers.

After Communion, all kneel.

The Prayer after Communion

Let us pray. **Almighty and ever living God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.**

The Blessing and Dismissal

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Closing Hymn #535 *From the Hymnal 1982*

Music

Welcome! Please join us for **refreshments** following the 10am service. Thanks to Kathy and Jay Higle for hosting today. If you are new to the parish and wish to be added to **our mailing list**, please complete the form below and place it in the collection plate.

The **flowers on the High Altar** are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Suzie O'Cain by her husband, Dr Lynwood O'Cain.

A warm welcome to Starrla Lares, our **preacher** this morning. Starrla is in the discernment process for ordination in the Episcopal Diocese of Albany. Thank you to those **reading** and **leading prayers**, at 8am Lynne Priestley, and at 10am Libby Smith-Holmes and Daniel Beach.

We are grateful to **Alec Noll** for playing at the 10am service. Alec is a member of Bethesda's choir. Derek returns to organ bench next Sunday.

The **Choir** season resumes on Sunday, Sept 13. We are always eager to welcome new singers and substitutes into the program. If you know of anyone interested in participating in this enriching ministry, please speak to Kathleen or Derek.

Summer Music Our Organist, Derek Stannard writes: *As our Summer Music Program comes to a close, I want to take a moment to thank you for making this special season of music possible. While our choir was away, it was a joy to keep the musical life of Bethesda vibrant through an extraordinary series of guest artists. Over the course of the summer, we welcomed gifted singers and instrumentalists, including Elizabeth Sterling, John Fatuzzo, Carla Fisk, Michael and Stephani Emery, Edda Roemelt, Tara Hanish, Elizabeth Huntley, Musicians of Ma'alwyck, Robert Moore, Alec Noll, and Ann Marie Adamick.*
We heard music for voice, trumpet, cello, harp, violin, flute, and saxophone, with repertoire spanning centuries—from Bach, Telemann, and Corelli to Fauré, Mendelssohn, Gounod, and contemporary composers. Each Sunday brought a different musical experience, yet each artist helped us discover new ways that music can enrich our worship through beauty, reflection, joy, and wonder.
I am especially grateful for the opportunity to bring so many outstanding musicians from our own region into the life of Bethesda. Their generosity, artistry, and enthusiasm have made this summer truly memorable.
None of this would be possible without your support. The Summer Music Program depends upon the generosity of our congregation, and I hope you will consider making a contribution to help sustain and grow this program in the years ahead. Your support allows Bethesda to welcome professional musicians, explore a rich variety of repertoire, and ensure that our musical life remains vibrant even when the choir is on summer break.
Thank you for listening so generously, for welcoming each of our guest musicians, and for recognizing the important place music holds in the life of our congregation. It has been a privilege to share this summer of music with you.

Special Monthly Envelope Funds raised in **September** will be divided between the feeding ministry at the local Presbyterian – United Church of Christ which provides a daily hot meal to those in need; and Christ Church Food Pantry, a ministry operated by the Episcopal parish in Ballston Spa.

A **9/11 Remembrance Ceremony** will be held at the *Tempered by Memory* sculpture in High Rock Park, 112 High Rock Avenue on Friday, 11th September. Please arrive by 8.15am. The ceremony begins at 8.30am.

Study Group *Learning from the life and witness of Bonhoeffer.* Join David and Cheryl Olsen for a three-week study of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–1945), a German pastor and

theologian whose courageous faith and witness continue to challenge and inspire Christians today. Three Wednesdays - September 30, October 7 & October 14 - beginning at 6:30 p.m. For more information or to register, contact the church office at 518.584.5980.
The fall meeting of the **Bethesda Book Club** will be held Thursday, October 8th at 5:00 to discuss Joanna Cannon's delightful *The Problem with Goats and Sheep*. Please email the church office to sign up or speak to Mary Sanders Shartle if you have any questions.

Christianity Rediscovered is an online course held on the third Sunday of every month (September 20, October 18, November 15) from 7:30–8:30 pm. Join in a thought-provoking discussion of *Christianity Rediscovered* by Vincent J. Donovan, a modern classic that challenges us to rethink evangelism, mission, and the relationship between the Gospel and culture. Order the book on Amazon, and register via office@bethesdachurch.org

The 2026 **Annual Bible Symposium** at the Cathedral of All Saints, Albany on Saturday, 31 October, features the Reverend Dr Ephraim Radner, Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology at Wycliffe College, Toronto. One of the Anglican Communion's most respected theologians, Dr Radner draws on decades of scholarship in biblical interpretation, theology, and church history, inviting us to consider how Scripture reveals Christ and shapes Christian faith beyond the limits of historical inquiry alone. For information and registration, go to www.cathedralofallsaints.org/special-events

The **Office** re-opens the week of 20 September.

LifeWorks Community Action gratefully receives donations of canned foods and personal hygiene products. Items may be left in the box by the side door entrance.

Please place this form in the collection plate if you would like us to get in touch with you:

Name:
_____
Phone:
_____
Email address:
_____
Home address:
_____
Preferred contact method:
_____

Contact Reasons:

☐ Visitor or new resident
☐ Would like more information about the church and/or worship
☐ Interested in opportunities to serve
☐ Would like to speak with or have a visit from the priest
☐ Would like information about pledge envelopes or regular giving to Bethesda
☐ Other _____