

St. Francis Blessing of the Animals

October 4, 2026

Casual Blended

Bethany Lutheran Church

4500 Hampden Ave, Cherry Hills Village, CO 80113

bethany-denver.org



Bethany Benevolence Team

2025-2026 RECIPIENTS

Habitat for Humanity	\$5,000.00	Optimist Club	\$1,000.00
Inner City Health	\$3,750.00	LuMin	\$5,000.00
Metro Caring	\$4,000.00	Heartland	\$4,000.00
Rice and Beans	\$5,000.00	LFS	\$5,000.00
IFCS	\$17,000.00	Total: \$49,750.00	

The Benevolence Team provides funds for non-profit organizations that are part of Bethany's Outreach initiatives.



+ We Prepare Our Hearts +

Prelude

Trumpet Tune in D

Paul Fey

Welcome to Worship

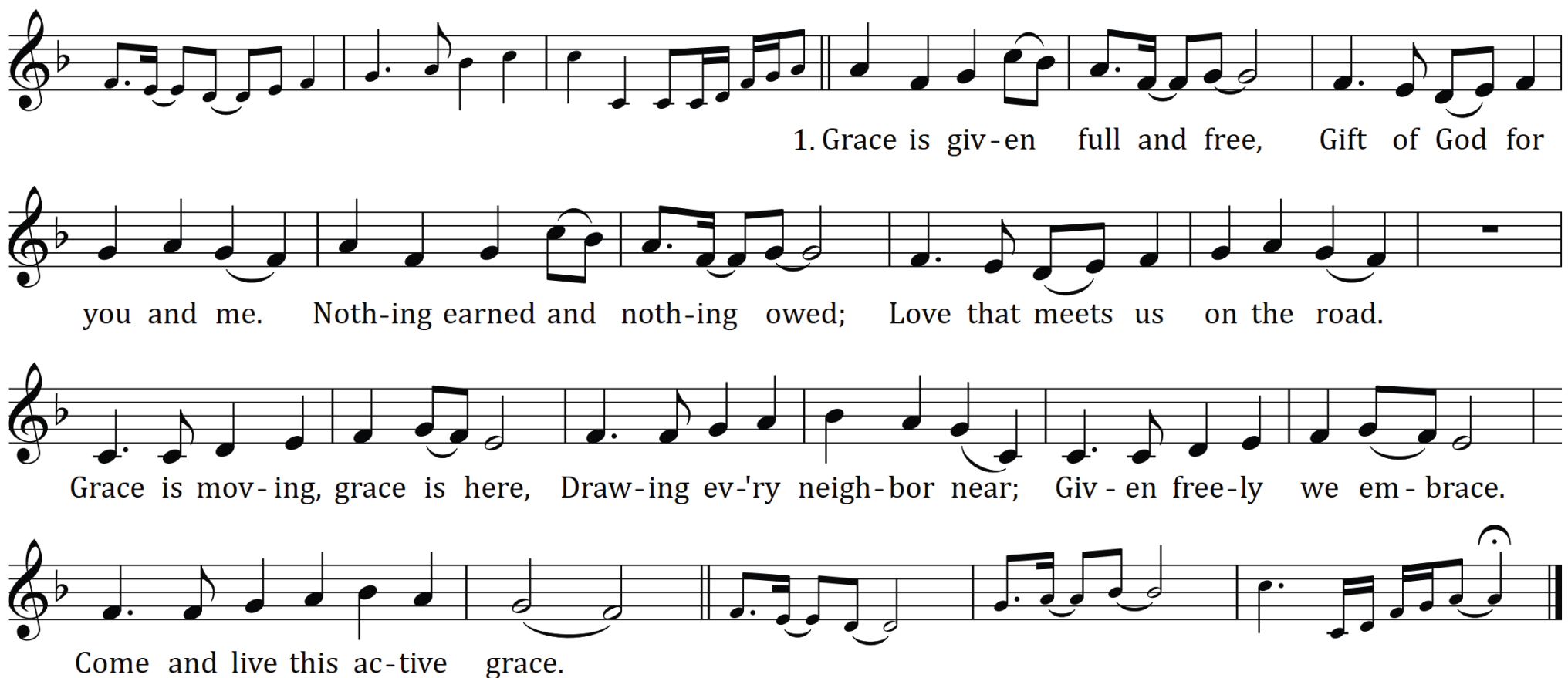
Pastor Gary Sandberg

To fill out your digital connection card, go to:
www.tinyurl.com/BethanyConnect.



Song of Praise

Active Grace



1. Grace is giv-en full and free, Gift of God for
you and me. Noth-ing earned and noth-ing owed; Love that meets us on the road.
Grace is mov-ing, grace is here, Draw-ing ev-'ry neigh-bor near; Giv-en free-ly we em-brace.
Come and live this ac-tive grace.

A Time of Confession

Holy and Compassionate God,

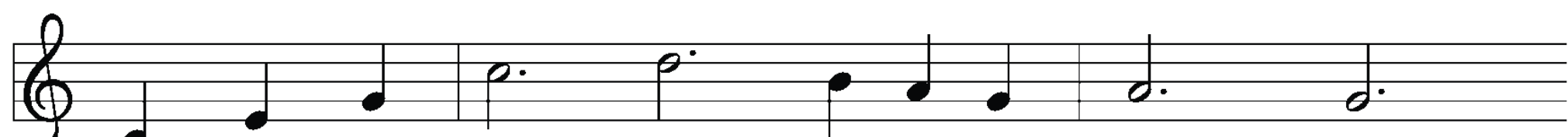
Please forgive me for those times when I use creation more than I care for creation. I am sorry for the times when I am too busy to recognize the beauty of creation around me.

I confess that I can be impatient and controlling.

God's Gift of Forgiveness

Hear these words: God forgives you of the ways that you make creation something that serves you. God forgives you of the actions that you have taken that destroy more than build up. God forgives you because you are created to be in the image of God.

As a created, loved, forgiven person of God, love and care for creation the way that God loves and cares for you.



1 Morn - ing has bro - ken like the first morn - ing;
2 Sweet the rain's new fall, sun - lit from heav - en,
3 Mine is the sun - light! Mine is the morn - ing,



black-bird has spo - ken like the first bird.
like the first dew - fall on the first grass.
born of the one light E - den saw play!



Praise for the sing - ing! Praise for the morn - ing!
Praise for the sweet - ness of the wet gar - den,
Praise with e - la - tion, praise ev - 'ry morn - ing,



Praise for them, spring - ing fresh from the Word!
sprung in com - plete - ness where God's feet pass.
God's re - cre - a - tion of the new day!

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965
Music: BUNESSAN, Gaelic tune
Text © Miss E. Farjeon Will Trust, admin. David Higham Associates

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Greeting

Pastor Gary Sandberg

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

Prayer of the Day
God of creation,
You shower us with blessing, including the joy of pets in our lives. Help us to never take for granted the love and acceptance that we receive from our pets. Help us to care for them as a shepherd cares for the sheep. Amen

Cluck, cluck, cluck, I'm a chicken! Bark, bark, bark, I'm a dog!
Neigh, neigh, neigh, I'm a horsey! Ribbet, ribbet, ribbet, I'm a frog!
B - L - E - S - S the animals. B - L - E - S - S.... The snakes.
Be a loving person every day, and appreciate the creatures that God makes.
Meow, meow, meow, I'm a kitty! Growl, growl, growl, I'm a bear!
Chirp, chirp, chirp, I'm a cricket! "What's up Doc?" I'm a hare!
B - L - E - S - S the animals. B - L - E - S - S.... The snakes.
Be a loving person every day, and appreciate the creatures that God makes.
Thank you, Father, for the fuzzy little hamster that I cuddle
and the slimy salamander in the creek.
For the fishies in the ocean and the raccoons in the forest
And the toucans in the jungle with the giant colored beaks!
B - L - E - S - S the animals. B - L - E - S - S.... The snakes.
Be a loving person every day, and appreciate the creatures that God makes.

We Prepare to Hear God’s Word

ACTIVE GRACE



2. Speak, O God, and help us hear
Words that calm our hearts of fear. Turn our list - ening in - to life, Grace that meets a
world of strife. Grace is mov - ing, grace is here, Draw - ing ev - 'ry neigh - bor near;
Giv - en free - ly we em - brace. Come and live this ac - tive grace.

+ We Encounter God's Word

Today's Sermon is based on readings from:

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly ab

Genesis 1:20-25

Vicki Daub

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." 21 So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." 23 And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day. 24 And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. 25 God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind and the cattle of every kind and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

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

Matthew 6:25-34

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to your span of life? 28 And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' 32 For it is the gentiles who seek all these things, and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 "So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

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

Sermon

Deacon Debra Alba

Sermon Notes

Blessing of the Animals

As the congregation sings the Song of the Day, you will be directed by the Ushers to bring your animals forward to be blessed.

Song of the Day All Things Bright and Beautiful WOV 767

Please remain seated.

Refrain



All things bright and beau - ti - ful, all crea - tures great and small,
all things wise and won - der - ful, the Lord God made them all.



1 Each lit - tle flow'r that o - pens, each lit - tle bird that sings,
2 The pur - ple - head - ed moun - tains, the riv - er run - ning by,
3 The cold wind in the win - ter, the pleas - ant sum - mer sun,
4 God gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell

Refrain



God made their glow - ing col - ors, God made their ti - ny wings.
the sun - set, and the morn - ing that bright-ens up the sky.
the ripe fruits in the gar - den, God made them ev - 'ry one.
how great is God Al - might - y, who has made all things well.

Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–1895, alt.
Music: ROYAL OAK, English tune, 17th cent., adapt. Martin Shaw, 1875–1958

Blessing of the Animals at Home

Prayers of the People

Pastor Gary Sandberg

We Share God’s Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always! **And also with you.**
(Please share a sign of peace with those around you.)

Abundantly Bethany

Pastor Gary Sandberg

- Confirmation Projects
- Outdoor Adventures

+ We Worship God With Our Offerings +

The Offering

You can give in the following ways; Thank you for your gifts!

- On our **website**, find the GIVE button in the header or under the Get Involved tab at:

Bethany-Denver.org

- Through **SubSplash** - Use your phone’s camera to scan this **QR Code** 
- Unlock your phone, hold near the **NFC card** (on pew back), and wait for the notification to appear
- **Mail** in your check to the office (4500 E. Hampden Ave. Cherry Hills Village, CO 80113)
- Sunday mornings, drop your offering in the plate as it is passed

Musical Offering

You Are Holy (Prince of Peace)

Marc Imboden and Tammi Rhoton

Sounds of Praise, dir. Paula Wills & Bethany Youth Choir, dir. Laura Tribby

You are holy. You are mighty. You are worthy, worthy of praise.
I will follow. I will listen. I will love you, all of my days.
I will sing to and worship the King who is worthy.
And I will love and adore him, and I will bow down before him.
You are my Prince of Peace, and I will live my life for you.
You are Lord of lords, you are King of kings, you are mighty God, Lord of everything.
You're Emmanuel, You're the Great I Am, you're the Prince of Peace who is the Lamb.
You're the living God, You're my saving grace. You will reign forever,
You are Ancient of Days.
You are Alpha, Omega, Beginning and End.
You're my Savior, Messiah, Redeemer and Friend.
You are my Prince of Peace, and I will live my life for you.

+ The Community Meal +

Invitation to The Communion Table

Pastor Nate Preisinger

Celebration of Holy Communion

May you know God's presence in this moment

God is with us here.

Come to this table with grateful hearts.

We lift our hearts to God.

Let us be thankful for Christ's promise of grace.

With gratitude, we receive this gift.

Blessing of the Bread and Wine

The Lord's Prayer (Ecumenical translation)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Communion Instruction

Bethany welcomes all to receive the body and blood of Christ in Holy Communion. You are invited to take communion at your seat. Please dispose of your communion set in the waste baskets at the exit doors.

Communion Music

Creation's King

Paul Blaoche and Graham Kendrick

Sounds Of Praise dir. Paula Wills

All creation is a song waiting to be sung; all of nature like a prayer waiting for a tongue.

But who will give it voice and make its anthem ring,
or rise to lead a choir of all created things?

Lord, hear your people sing.

Blessing, honor, glory, power to creation's King;
Songs of earth and songs of Heaven join as one to bring;

All the nations are a song waiting to be sung;
every instrument and voice created for the One,

The Maker of all things, Majesty above, who bought us back from death,
with such a costly love;

What praise could be enough?

Angels gather around Your throne, every race and nations singing;
They all bow down to You alone.

Table Blessing

+ God Sends Us to Serve +

Sending Invitation and Blessing

Deacon Debra Alba

Song of Sending

Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory

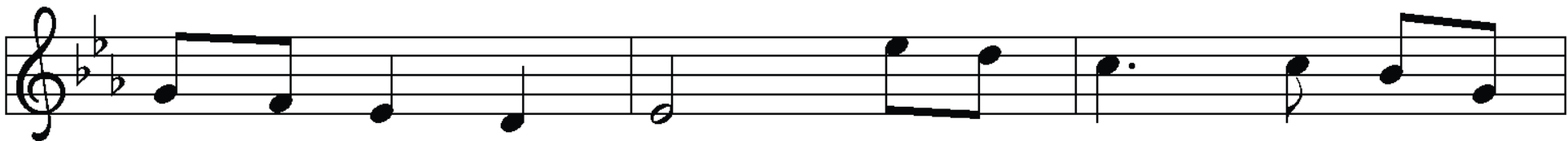
ELW 561



1 Joy - ous light of heav'n-ly glo - ry, lov-ing glow of God's own
2 In the stars that grace the dark - ness, in the blaz - ing sun of
3 You who made the heav-en's splen - dor, ev-'ry danc - ing star of



face, you who sing cre - a - tion's sto - ry, shine on
dawn, in the light of peace and wis - dom, we can
night, make us shine with gen - tle jus - tice, let us



ev - 'ry land and race. Now as eve - ning falls a -
hear your qui - et song. Love that fills the night with
each re - flect your light. Might - y God of all cre -



round us, we shall raise our songs to you. God of day - break,
won - der, love that warms the wea - ry soul, love that bursts all
a - tion, gen - tle Christ who lights our way, lov - ing Spir - it



God of shad - ows, come and light our hearts a - new.
chains a - sun - der, set us free and make us whole.
of sal - va - tion, lead us on to end - less day.

Text: Greek hymn, 3rd cent., para. Marty Haugen, b. 1950
Music: JOYOUS LIGHT, Marty Haugen
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As we go forth into the week ahead we remember our calling as the people of Bethany. Together we will:

- Worship and encounter a God who loves us;
- Embrace healthy dialogue that promotes unity over division;
- Respond to the needs of the world through generosity and action.

With this as our mission, go in peace, serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Toccata on "Old Hundredth"

Michael Burkhardt

Things to Know About News & Events

- Worship:
- Pet Blessing at the 10am service
 - Choir for middle & high school students: Spiritus rehearsals on Sundays from 11:20-12:00 10/25, 11/15, 12/13,12/20

- Education/Faith Formation:
- Adult Education - TODAY: 9:45 in room 210, 11:30 in Chapel
 - High School Bible Study - TODAY 11:30am southeast entrance/Dunkin Donuts
 - Middle School Coyote Howl Retreat: Fri Oct 2 – Sun Oct 4
 - Summer 2027 trip! Info Meeting -Oct 11, Room 412, 11:30-12:15

- Hospitality:
- Bethany Outdoor Adventures: Sat Oct 17
 - Understanding Your Grief Support Group: on Sundays 10/18 – 11/22 and 12/6 – 12/13 from 11:15 – 12:45
 - Women of Bethany! Save the date of October 27, Tuesday at 11:30
 - Halloween Party When was the last time you attended a Halloween Party? Oct 27 10am
 - End of life planning. Tuesday, October 20

- Outreach:
- Bethany Social Justice Group: Voting Security and Election Processes. Oct. 6, 4-5pm
 - Outreach Ministry Fair Oct. 11
 - Family Promise: Oct. 4-11
 - Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains – Home for the Holidays Donation Drive Nov 4
 - Global Mission: Bethany’s Global Mission Ministry proposals- Nov 17

Things To Know About Worship

Welcome to Bethany! If you have questions or would like to consider making Bethany your church home, visit our website, Bethany-Denver.org, or stop by the Newcomer Nook after worship. The pastoral team, consisting of Pastor Gary Sandberg (he/him), Pastor Nate Preisinger (he/him), Deacon Debra Alba (she/her) and Director of Pastoral Care Janet Mortinsen (she/her), is available to speak with you.

Bethany Lutheran Church values people of diverse race, sexual identity, ethnicity, and political affiliation. All are welcome at Bethany Lutheran Church and this community is enriched because you are here. We are together for good!

Sunday Worship services: (8:30am Traditional) - worship follows traditional Lutheran liturgy. (10:00am Casual Blended) a flow of worship that includes the elements of Lutheran worship with music that spans multiple genres and brings some creative ways to engage the theme of the day. Worship leaders are generally dressed more casually.

Participating in Worship: There will be times during worship when you are invited to stand, but if it is more comfortable or more meaningful for you to remain seated, please feel free to do so.

Communion Statement: Everyone gathered for worship is invited to take part in Communion. Jesus did not place any barriers around who received communion and neither does Bethany.

Safety: Bethany Lutheran Church is committed to maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. If at any time you feel uncomfortable, unsafe or have concerns, please speak with one of our staff or designated leaders. We are here to listen and to support you.

Hearing Assistance Device: Please see the Sound Tech in the A/V booth at the rear of the Sanctuary if you need a hearing assistance device.

Worship Servants: Thank you to all the A/V team, Ushers, Communion Servers, Altar Guild, Musicians, Embrace Volunteers and Sacristans for your work to greet people and make worship happen. We always welcome Worship Servants - go to www.signupschedule.com/Bethany to sign up!

Children at Bethany: Children and youth are a blessing from God and we love having children in the Sanctuary! Additionally, we offer several options for children and families to feel comfortable in a variety of spaces on Sunday mornings:

Fidget Station: We know that all of God's children (young and old) are wonderfully and fearfully made in the image of God. And, at Bethany, ALL are welcome to worship. Available outside the Sanctuary's north doors is a Fidget Station. Children and adults are invited to use these fidgets and art supplies to aid in your spiritual growth and presence in worship. Please return items to the station when you are finished.

Busy Bags: Near the Sanctuary doors you will find premade bags perfect for littles. Pick one up on the way in and return it on the way out.

Nursery: For directions to our Nursery, please speak with an usher.