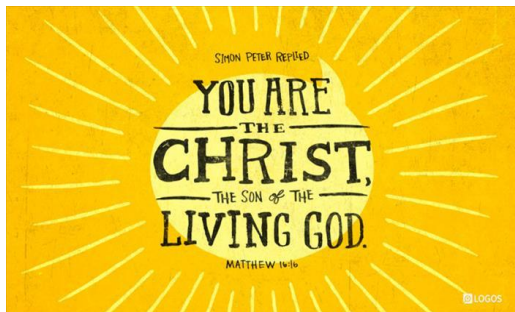




Bethel United Church August 23, 2026

- All **Bolded Text** indicates a congregational response

Welcome and Announcements

Good morning, everyone, and welcome to Bethel United Church in Rideau Ferry Ontario.

Today is August 23 and the thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost. My name is Jeannie Taylor, a LLWL, and I am pleased to welcome all of you into this place of worship, whether you're worshipping with us virtually, or in person in our Sanctuary.

This week, our service is being led by: Ruth Anne Johnson and our choir, Aidan Williamson, Kathleen Williamson, and Lynne Evans.

A quick reminder of our regularly scheduled Bethel activities: Chat and Chew, in person and in the hall on Tuesdays at 1:30; our Zoom Prayer and Share resumes on September 3rd.

From 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday August 26th, Bethel United Church will again host a Community Home Support - Lanark County Grief & Bereavement Drop-In Support Group Session in our Church Hall.

To register, please call 613 - 267- 6400 or email bradd@chslc.ca

Gathering Music MV 14 (x3) "Where Two or Three are Gathered"
**Where two or three are gathered in my name,
I am there, I am there.**

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Land Acknowledgement

For thousands of years, Indigenous people have walked this land, weaving their identity and their spirituality intimately with the land. We acknowledge that we are on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabeg people. May we grow into living with respect on this land, moving into reconciliation through peace and friendship with all who live, work and worship on it.

Mission and Service Story

Faithful Futures

Across Southern Ontario, The Hub Community Network is creating welcoming spaces where youth and young adults can find connection, community, and a deeper understanding of God's inclusive love. Supported by Mission and Service, The Hub is helping young people discover spaces where they can explore faith, build relationships, and find their place in the church.

Every generation faces its own challenges, and many young people today are carrying significant pressures. Rising costs, uncertainty about the future, and increased feelings of isolation can make it difficult to find a sense of stability and belonging. For many youth and young adults, finding a community where they feel welcomed, known, and accepted can make a meaningful difference.

The Hub responds to this need by creating opportunities for young people to gather and connect. Through churches, camps, small groups, worship services, and online spaces, The Hub brings youth and young adults together in environments where they can ask questions, share experiences, and grow in faith alongside others.

These gatherings are more than events on a calendar. A shared meal, a conversation with a mentor, or time spent with peers can become an important moment of connection. These relationships help young people feel supported as they navigate life's challenges and continue discovering who they are and who they are becoming.

The Hub also works alongside congregations, helping churches strengthen their youth ministries and develop lasting relationships with young people. By supporting communities in creating spaces of welcome and inclusion, The Hub helps congregations move beyond the initial invitation to attend, and grow toward building meaningful connections where young people know they belong.

Our Mission and Service gifts help make this ministry possible. Through this support, The Hub Community Network can continue creating spaces where youth and young adults experience community, explore faith, and encounter the inclusive love of God.

Our gifts through Mission and Service support ministries that walk alongside young people and create places of belonging. Let's give generously so youth and young adults can continue being welcomed into spaces of connection and community.

Call to Worship (Responsive)

In the rustling of the leaves

In the cool summer breeze

In the shade beneath the trees

You are there.

In the quiet of the night

With the moon and stars for light

In our moments of delight

You are there.

When there's music in the air
And a friend to show they care
In the scripture and in prayer
You are here.

Come! Let us worship our omnipresent God.

Sung Call to Worship

MV 18 (x2)

"Lord Prepare Me to be a Sanctuary"

**Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary,
pure and holy tried and true; with thanksgiving,
I'll be a living sanctuary for you.**

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Lighting of the Christ Candle and the World Candle

In times of change and uncertainty, the light of Christ is a beacon of promise and hope. The Christ candle reminds us that Jesus is the Light of the World who guides us on the way of love, peace and justice.

We light the World Candle as a prayer for all the places that are hurting, whether from wars or earthquakes or forest fires, and all the people who long for peace and a safe place to live. May we shine a light of hope into the darkest corners of the world.

Opening Prayer

Encircle us. Embrace us, God. Visit us in small Spaces.

Splash summertime epiphanies on our paths.

Grace us to see them.

Music-maker God, sing through our forests,
splash in our rivers, dance in our fields.

You are here. We are here.

Encircle us with your love. Amen

Opening Hymn

MV 154

"Deep in Our Hearts"

**¹ Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
deep in our hearts there is a common song;
deep in our hearts there is a common story,
telling Creation that we are one.**

**² Deep in our hearts there is a common purpose;
deep in our hearts there is a common goal;
deep in our hearts there is a sacred message,
justice and peace in harmony.**

**³ Deep in our hearts there is a common longing;
deep in our hearts there is a common theme;
deep in our hearts there is a common current,
flowing to freedom like a stream.**

**⁴ Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
deep in our hearts there is a common song;
deep in our hearts there is a common story,
telling Creation that we are one.**

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Passing of the Peace

Prayer for Reconciliation (Unison)

God of mercy and patience, be with us in this time of worship. Help us to remember that our lives are meant to be gifts to others, for healing, hope, comfort, peace and love. Forgive us when we get so caught up in the busy-ness of life and the acquisition of possessions that we neglect to serve others. Enlighten us again with your spirit and your words of healing love. Give us hearts for caring and sharing. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Words of Assurance (Responsive)

God's love never leaves us. We are loved, understood, forgiven, and enabled to begin again. For God's great grace toward us,

Let us praise our God! Amen.

Theme Conversation

One Body, Many Gifts

Scripture Readings

Romans 12: 1-8

One Body in Christ, with gifts that differ.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 16: 13-20

Jesus asks, "Who do you say that I am?"

Reflection

"Who Do You Say That I Am?"

Hymn

VU 120

"O Jesus, I Have Promised"

**¹ O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
remain for ever near me, my Saviour and my friend:
I shall not fear the journey if you are by my side,
nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.**

**² O let me feel you near me: the world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear;
my foes are ever near me, around me and within;
but, Jesus, then draw nearer and shield my soul from sin.**

**³ O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;
now speak, and make me listen, O guardian of my soul.**

**⁴ O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you,
that where you are in glory your servant shall be too.
And Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
O give me grace to follow, my Saviour and my friend.**

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Invitation to the Offering

Offering Music

Offering Response VU 542 “We Give You But Your Own”

**We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may be;
all that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.**

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Offering Prayer

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Today we have special prayers for:

Joy	James	Sandy	Tom
Leah	Brynnley	Ellen & Art	Sandra
Liam	Kim P.	Robin	Rick
Janet	Haley	Grace	Chris L.
Carol	Bill	Helen	Dave S.
Kim H.	Chris	Lynda	The Rylie
Fran	Ellen Jane	Sarah	Family
Lainey	Jennifer	Morgan	

And as a community we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us, saying:

Our Father....

Closing Hymn MV 176

"Three Things I Promise"

- 1 Three things I promise, Holy God,
in age and youth, in life and death:
to bless your Name, and cling to Christ,
and listen for the Spirit's breath.**
- 2 Your love unfolded time and space,
and life, and all that life became,
and so, with thankful heart and voice,
through good and ill, I bless your Name.**
- 3 I follow, serve, and cling to Christ
amid out culture's tides and trends,
for here your Name is most revealed:
Majestic Love, and Best of Friends.**
- 4 Enlivened as the Spirit moves
to cleanse, awaken, and renew,
I pray that justice, peace, and truth,
may seed and grow in all I do.**
- 5 If I should live when vigour fades,
and family and friends are gone,
three acts of loving faith remain
when days are slow, and work is done.**
- 6 Revive and guide me, Living God,
as day by day, until my death,
I bless your Name, and cling to Christ,
and listen for the Spirit's breath.**

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Commissioning and Benediction

Sung Benediction

**Go now in peace, never be afraid,
God will go with you each hour of everyday.
Go now in faith, steadfast strong and true,
Know God will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others, so all the world can see.
God will be there, watching us in love.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love. **Amen. Amen. Amen****

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