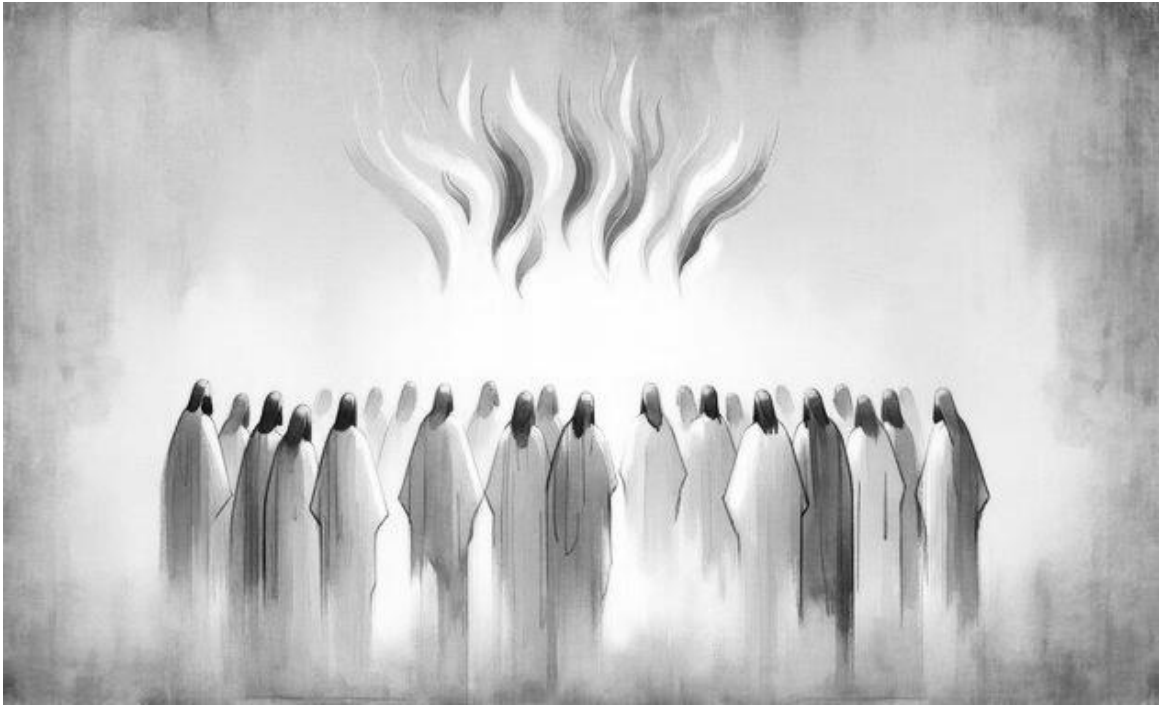


# Worship Guide for May 24, 2026

## Pentecost



### Welcome and Announcements

*Let us prepare our hearts for worship.*

### Psalm 61 (refrain)

**Hear my cry, oh God,  
Listen to my prayer, listen to my song,  
Singing praises – all along.**

### Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to 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 your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Brief silence for reflection.*

Gracious God, *have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.*

Gracious God, *have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.*

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. *Amen.*

### Gathering Hymn

### God of Tempest, God of Whirlwind



1 God of tem - pest, God of whirl - wind, as on Pen - te -  
 2 God of blaz - ing, God of burn - ing, all that blocks your  
 3 God of earth - quake, God of thun - der, shake us loose from  
 4 God of pas - sion, God un - sleep - ing, stir in us love's



cost de - scend! Drive us out from shel - tered com - fort;  
 pur - pose, purge! Through your church, Christ's liv - ing Bod - y,  
 leth - ar - gy! Break the chains of sin a - sun - der,  
 rest - less - ness! Where the peo - ple cry in an - guish,



past these walls your peo - ple send! Sweep us in - to cost - ly ser - vice,  
 let your flam - ing Spir - it surge! Where de - ceit con - ceals in - jus - tice,  
 for earth's heal - ing set us free! Crum - ble walls that still di - vide us;  
 may we share your heart's dis - tress. Rouse us from con - tent with e - vil;



there with Christ to bear the cross, there with Christ to bear the cross!  
 kin - dle us to speak your truth, kin - dle us to speak your truth!  
 make us one in Christ our Lord, make us one in Christ our Lord!  
 claim us for your king - dom's work, claim us for your king - dom's work!

### **Prayer of the Day**

Together we pray: ***O God, on this day you open the hearts of your faithful people by sending into us your Holy Spirit. Direct us by the light of that Spirit, that we may have a right judgment in all things and rejoice at all times in your peace, through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.***

### **Reading of the Word**

#### **First Reading: Acts 2:1-21**

<sup>1</sup> When the day of Pentecost had come, [the apostles] were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. <sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

<sup>5</sup> Now there were devout Jews from every people under heaven living in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup> And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. <sup>7</sup> Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?” <sup>8</sup> And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? <sup>9</sup> Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, <sup>11</sup> Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.” <sup>12</sup> All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” <sup>13</sup> But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”

<sup>14</sup> But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Fellow Jews and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. <sup>15</sup> Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. <sup>16</sup> No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup> ‘In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. <sup>18</sup> Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. <sup>19</sup> And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. <sup>20</sup> The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day. <sup>21</sup> Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ ”

Word of God, Word of Life. ***Thanks be to God.***

**RAIN OR SHINE - June 14 BBQ & Potluck Picnic: Mark your calendars and help kick off summer at New Salem with a BBQ and Potluck Picnic following worship on Sunday, June 14. Keep an eye on future worship guides/emails for more details!**

**Psalm: Psalm 104:24-34, 35b**

<sup>24</sup> How manifold are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

<sup>25</sup> **Yonder is the sea, great and wide, with its swarms too many to number, living things both small and great.**

<sup>26</sup> There go the ships to and fro, and Leviathan, which you made for the sport of it.

<sup>27</sup> **All of them look to you to give them their food in due season.**

<sup>28</sup> You give it to them; they gather it; you open your hand, and they are filled with good things.

<sup>29</sup> **When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.**

<sup>30</sup> You send forth your Spirit, and they are created; and so you renew the face of the earth.

<sup>31</sup> **May the glory of the Lord endure forever; O Lord, rejoice in all your works.**

<sup>32</sup> You look at the earth and it trembles; you touch the mountains and they smoke.

<sup>33</sup> **I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will praise my God while I have my being.**

<sup>34</sup> May these words of mine please God. I will rejoice in the Lord.

<sup>35b</sup> **Bless the Lord, O my soul. Hallelujah!**

**Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13**

<sup>3b</sup> No one can say “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>4</sup> Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, <sup>5</sup> and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, <sup>6</sup> and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. <sup>7</sup> To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. <sup>8</sup> To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another the working of powerful deeds, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup> All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

<sup>12</sup> For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Word of God, Word of Life. ***Thanks be to God.***

**Children’s Message**

Welcome to New Salem - We are blessed to have you worship with us today!



If you are looking for a church home, please contact Pastor Terry or Traci Schanke in the church office at 218-586-2262 or via email at [newsalem@paulbunyan.net](mailto:newsalem@paulbunyan.net). If you are a visitor, please stay for coffee fellowship after church, and sign our guest book outside the church office!

Website: [newsalemlutheran.org](http://newsalemlutheran.org)

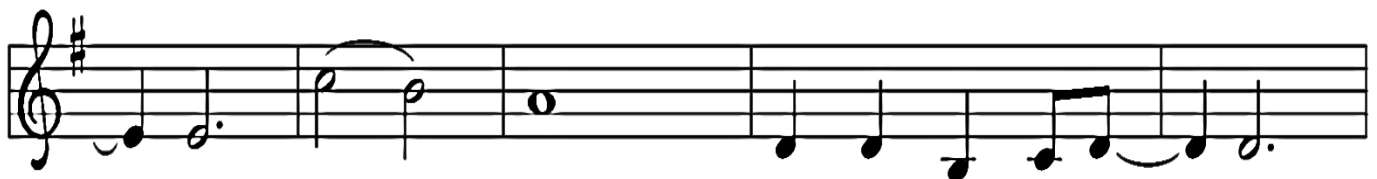
YouTube Channel: New Salem Lutheran Church, Turtle River, MN

Gospel Acclamation

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah (sing 3X)



Hal-le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal -



- le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le -



lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah.

Gospel: John 20:19-23

<sup>19</sup> When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." <sup>22</sup> When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

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

Sermon

## Worship Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to assist with various Sunday ministries here at New Salem! Ushers, readers/Communion assistants, helpers to set up Communion before the worship service and tidy up afterward, offering counters (we will train you!), and hosts for our coffee fellowship after worship. Sign up as a family or team up with a friend or two! **Signup sheets are available on the back table in the Fellowship Hall. Remember: If no one signs up to host coffee fellowship, there is NO coffee fellowship.**



### Hymn of the Day

### Spirit of Gentleness (continues next page)

*Refrain*



Spir - it, Spir - it of gen - tle - ness, blow through the wil - der - ness



call - ing and free; Spir - it, Spir - it of rest - less - ness,



stir me from plac - id - ness, wind, wind on the sea.



- 1 You moved on the wa - ters, you called to the deep,
- 2 You swept through the des - ert, you stung with the sand,
- 3 You sang in a sta - ble, you cried from a hill,
- 4 You call from to - mor - row, you break an - cient schemes.



then you coaxed up the moun - tains from the val - leys of sleep;  
and you goad - ed your peo - ple with a law and a land;  
then you whis - pered in si - lence when the whole world was still;  
From the bond - age of sor - row all the cap - tives dream dreams;



and o - ver the e - ons you called to each thing:  
 and when they were blind - ed with i - dols and lies,  
 and down in the cit - y you called once a - gain,  
 our wom - en see vi - sions, our men clear their eyes.

*Refrain*



“A - wake from your slum - bers and rise on your wings.”  
 then you spoke through your proph - ets to o - pen their eyes.  
 when you blew through your peo - ple on the rush of the wind.  
 With . . . bold new de - ci - sions your peo - ple a - rise.

### Prayers of the People

Hear us, O God. *Your mercy is great.*

### Sharing the Peace

### Tithes and Offerings

### Offertory Hymn

### Come to the Table



Come to the ta - ble of mer - cy, pre - pared with the wine and the bread.



All who are hun - gry and thirst - y, come, and your souls will be fed.



Come at the Lord's in - vi - ta - tion; re - ceive from his nail - scarred hand.



Eat of the bread of sal - va - tion; drink of the blood of the Lamb.

**Offering Prayer**

Together we pray: *Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.*

**Words of Institution****Lord's Prayer**

Together we pray: *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.*

**Sharing Christ's Meal****Communion Hymn #1****Let Us Break Bread Together**

1 Let us break bread to - geth-er on our knees;  
 2 Let us drink wine to - geth-er on our knees;  
 3 Let us praise God to - geth-er on our knees;



let us break bread to - geth-er on our knees.  
 let us drink wine to - geth-er on our knees.  
 let us praise God to - geth-er on our knees.



When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing



sun, O Lord, have mer-cy on me.

Communion Hymn #2

## What Feast of Love



- 1 What feast of love is of-fered here, what ban-quet come from heav - en?  
 2 What light of truth is of-fered here, what cov - e - nant from heav - en?  
 3 What wine of love is of-fered here, what crim-son drink from heav - en?



What food of ev - er - last-ing life, what gra - cious gift is giv - en?  
 What hope of ev - er - last-ing life, what won-drous word is giv - en?  
 What stream of ev - er - last-ing life, what pre - cious blood is giv - en?



This, this is Christ the king, the bread come down from heav - en.  
 This, this is Christ the king, the sun come down from heav - en.  
 This, this is Christ the king, the sweet-est wine of heav - en.



Oh, taste and see and sing! How sweet the man - na giv - en!  
 Oh, see and hear and sing! The Word of God is giv - en!  
 Oh, taste and see and sing! The Son of God is giv - en!

Communion BlessingPost Communion Prayer

Together we pray: Life-giving God, *in the mystery of Christ's resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection, that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. Amen.*

Benediction

**Sending Hymn****Abide with Me**

1 A - bide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide.  
 2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;  
 3 I need thy pres - ence ev - 'ry pass - ing hour;  
 4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;  
 5 Hold thou thy cross be - fore my clos - ing eyes,



The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide.  
 earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way;  
 what but thy grace can foil the tempt - er's pow'r?  
 ills have no weight, and tears no bit - ter - ness.  
 shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;



When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,  
 change and de - cay in all a - round I see;  
 Who like thy - self my guide and stay can be?  
 Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy vic - to - ry?  
 heav'n's morn - ing breaks, and earth's vain shad - ows flee;



help of the help - less, oh, a - bide with me.  
 O thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.  
 Through cloud and sun - shine, oh, a - bide with me.  
 I tri - umph still, if thou a - bide with me!  
 in life, in death, O Lord, a - bide with me.

**Upcoming @ New Salem**

Mon, 5/25	Memorial Day Holiday – Church and Office Closed	
Wed, 5/27	Choir Practice	5 p.m.
Thurs, 5/28	Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Wed, 6/3	BACM Recital @ St. Bart's	12 noon
	Choir Practice	5 p.m.
Thurs, 6/4	Bible Study	9:30 a.m.

### Today's Worship Leaders/Assistants

**Presiding Clergy: Pastor Terry R. Hagensen**      **Social Media Coordinator: Nora Illies**  
**Ushers: Carol, Graig and Gabe Gilbertson**      **Setting the Lord's Table: Sonya & Paul Kraft**  
**Reader: Mert Schultz**      **Song Leader/Guitar: Mike Naylor**  
**Communion Assistant:**      **Cantor/AV Services: Traci Schanke**  
**Fellowship Hosts:**

#### New Salem Lutheran Church - Terry R. Hagensen, Pastor

7491 Island View Drive NE, Turtle River, MN 56601

Office Tel: 218-586-2262/Office Email (Traci Schanke): [newsalem@paulbunyan.net](mailto:newsalem@paulbunyan.net)

Website: [newsalemlutheran.org](http://newsalemlutheran.org)

YouTube Channel: New Salem Lutheran Church, Turtle River, MN

#### April Income vs Expenses (FINAL)

Total General Fund Income: \$18,653

Total Expenses: \$15,898

**SURPLUS** for April \$2,775

5.17 General Fund Offering: \$3,747

#### Attendance/Social Media Engagement (as of 5.22.26)

Sunday, May 17 (in person/online): 67/0 (no livestream)

Facebook reach: 49,555

YouTube Views: 989

YouTube Subscribers: 142

#### Announcements for the Week of May 24, 2026

**Make a Joyful Noise – Join the Choir!** If you like to sing, join the New Salem Choir!

We are a fun, friendly, supportive group, and the ability to read music is not necessary! The choir sings for worship on the first and third Sundays of each month, as well as presenting special music at Christmas and Easter, and participating in the summer Bemidji Area Church Musicians recital. Rehearsals are at 5 p.m. on Wednesdays – come join us!

**Offering Reminder:** Please remember to indicate on your check/offering envelope how you wish your gift to be credited. Unmarked offerings/those marked “general” go toward New Salem’s annual operating expenses; gifts marked for other entities are credited as such in your giving record and sent to those organizations. Thank you for supporting the missions and good works of New Salem!

### New Salem's Food Shelf Volunteer Shifts for June



**BEMIDJI COMMUNITY**

**FOOD SHELF**

EST. 1962  
Faith. Food. Hope.

**Monday, June 8**

**9 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. and 12 noon–3:30 p.m.**

**Friday, June 12 – 9 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.**

**For more information or to volunteer, contact**

**Karin Snortland at [ksnortland5@gmail.com](mailto:ksnortland5@gmail.com) or 612-940-7312.**

### **Music Rights/Permissions for May 24**

Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service and include the printed music in this worship guide has been obtained from *ONE LICENSE*, License #A-726224; credits are as follows:

**Psalm 61** – Music: Ray Makeever; © Ray Makeever , Fairway Press

**God of Tempest, God of Whirlwind** – Text: Herman G. Steumpfle, Jr. (b. 1923)

Music: John Hughes (1873-1932)/Text © 2000 GIA Publications, Inc.

**Halle, Halle, Hallelujah** – Music: Caribbean traditional; arr. Mark Sedio (b. 1954)

Arr. © 1995 Augsburg Fortress

**Spirit of Gentleness** – Text and music: James K. Manley (b. 1940)

Text and music © 1978 James K. Manley

**Come to the Table** – Text: Claire Clonigen (b. 1942)/Music: Martin Nystrom (b. 1956)

Text/music © 1991 Integrity's Hosanna! Music; Juniper Landing Music, admin. Word Music

**Let Us Break Bread Together** – Text and music: African American spiritual

**What Feast of Love** – Text: Delores Dufner, OSB (b. 1939)/Music: English ballad, 16<sup>th</sup> cent.

Text © 1993 Delores Dufner, admin. OCP Publications

**Abide with Me** – Text: Henry F. Lyte (1793-1847)

Music: William H. Monk (1823-1899)



### **Save the Date for New Salem's Bemidji Area Church Musicians (BACM) Recital**

**New Salem will host a BACM recital featuring our church musicians on  
Wednesday, August 5 at 12 noon.**

**The performance will feature The New Salem Choir, directed by  
Annalise Aakhus, pianist Denise Laaveg,  
Sonya Kraft, flute, and Traci Djonne Schanke, soprano.**

**The recital will be followed by a luncheon in the  
Fellowship Hall, pricing still to be determined.**

**A free will offering supports the BACM Scholarship Fund  
for developing church musicians.**

## New Salem's May Mission Partner



**Evergreen**  
 Youth & Family Services  
*Strengthening Youth. Preserving Families.*

*New Salem's  
 Highlighted  
 Mission Partner  
 May 2026*



### OUR MISSION

Evergreen Youth & Family Services is a community-based organization committed to strengthening youth, preserving families and building relationships with an emphasis on those living in Northern Minnesota.

### OUR VALUES

Evergreen believes that communities are strongest when every individual is treated with dignity and respect and has support to achieve his/her full human potential. Evergreen chooses to remain client-centered with an emphasis on being responsive to each individual and families' needs while maintaining a high level of professionalism, compassion and empathy. We operate from a position of hope, faith and support. Our services and perspective are often grassroots in nature and it is because of our strong relationships and resources that Evergreen Youth & Family Services remains a catalyst in the region for proactive services, education and advocacy.

- ◆ Evergreen Youth & Family Services is a private, non-profit youth and family service provider.
- ◆ In the past 49 years, Evergreen has developed a safety net of services to strengthen youth, preserve families, and help support successful transitions to adulthood.
- ◆ Every year, over 1,000 children, youth, and young families come to us for emergency food and shelter, crisis intervention, mental health, and the skills and tools necessary to live a safe and healthy life.
- ◆ Youth and families of all backgrounds and walks of life are welcome. Approximately 60% of the youth we serve each year are Native American or mixed race, 30% are Caucasian, and 10% are African-American, Asian, Hispanic, or mixed race.

The Evergreen Youth & Family Services Shelter provides free shelter, coaching, and support services for **youth ages 9-17** who are experiencing an immediate personal or family crisis. The shelter can house up to 10 youth at a time and is **open 24 hours a day, 365 days per year**. Youth, their families, and other caregivers are also eligible to receive free drop-in counseling and/or family counseling services. All services are free.

### **God's Work, Our Treasure - May 2026**

This month New Salem is lifting up the work of Evergreen Youth & Family Services and urges you to consider the various ways you might support this valuable resource in our community. Please remember to indicate on your check or envelope that your gift is for Evergreen YFS. [evergreenyfs.org](http://evergreenyfs.org)

## The Bemidji Area Church Musicians

present

The 2026 Summer Recital Series - Our 39<sup>th</sup> Season!

Wednesdays, 12 - 12:30 p.m. Followed by a Luncheon

*This season's performances are dedicated  
to the memory of Kenneth J. Wold*

June 3	First City Handbell Choir, Carol L. Johnson and Vicki L. Stenerson,	St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church 1800 Irvine Ave. NW
June 10	Trinity Musicians	Trinity Lutheran Church 123 29 <sup>th</sup> St.
June 17	Ring Jubilant Praise, handbells; Kay Sue Eriksson, Laura Engelstad, piano; Taumi Wilson, Mary Larson, flute, piano	Evangelical Free Church 115 Carr Lake Rd. SW
June 24	Calvatyrian Bell Choir collaborating with Young Musicians of St. Phillip's Church	First Presbyterian Church 501 Minnesota Ave. NW
July 1	St. Mark's Musicians	St. Mark's Lutheran Church 2220 Anne St. NW
July 8	Wade Martin, vocalist, Jenn Ellis, piano Amanda Willis-Martin, piano; Mathison Martin, piano; Shar Paquette, piano	First Baptist Church 1555 Paul Bunyan Dr. NW
July 15	Lois Simonson, piano, Kari Miller, flute Sanna Gustafson, saxophone Janet Pederson, violin	Bemidji Covenant Church 5405 Hart Ln. NW (across from Bemidji Theater)
July 22	Glenn Seibel, euphonium Wayne Hoff, piano	United Methodist Church 924 Beltrami Ave. NW
July 29	Samantha Melberg, flute; Sarah Leach, piano Ben Bartholomew, saxophone	Calvary Lutheran Church 2508 Washington Ave. SE
August 5	The New Salem Choir; Denise Laaveg, piano Cheryl Durant, piano; Sonja Kraft, flute Traci Djonne Schanke, soprano	New Salem Lutheran Church 7491 Island View Dr. NE (Hwy 71 N at Turtle River)
August 12	Wayne Hoff, Carol L Johnson, Piano and Organ recital, Jennifer L. Johnson, vocalist	Aardahl Lutheran Church 2920 Van Buran Ave. SE
August 19	Sarah Carlson, organ, piano Claire Carlson, violin; Bob Madeson, euphonium Josh Grosvold, clarinet	First Lutheran Church 900 Bemidji Ave.
August 26	Emily Mathew, piano; Mike Locke, guitar Amy Williams, flute; Elaine Kleinsasser	Church of Christ 692 Mag Seven Ct. SW

Free will offering supports the BACM Music Scholarship Fund.

*Luncheon prices are determined by each venue.*

### **The Readings on This Day of Pentecost**

Fifty days after Passover, Jews kept the Pentecost festival, which originally celebrated the wheat harvest but had become the commemoration of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. As the fiftieth day of Easter, Christians maintained the festival, altering its focus to a celebration of the Spirit of the risen Christ in the church. In an oblique reference to Sinai, the fire of God's word is now on the foreheads of the faithful. In John, all believers receive the peace of the Lord. In Luke, especially the leaders are lauded. Pentecost concludes the Easter season.

**John 20:19-23** - The Gospel of John is appointed for most of the primary festivals of the liturgical year because of John's high Christology and its centrality in the development of Christian doctrine. John says theologically the narrative of Pentecost: the breath of the risen Christ has enlivened the Christian community with the Spirit of God. This passage from John 20 was appointed also for the second Sunday of Easter.

**Acts 2:1-21** - The narrative of Pentecost exemplifies Luke's expert storytelling ability. The reading includes hidden references to the Hebrew Bible, a citation from the prophets, a contemporary geography lesson, an account of miracles, and the folksy detail of the accusation of drunkenness. As we await the eschatological end of all things, we are now those who prophesy, see visions, and dream dreams.

**1 Corinthians 12:3b-13** - The reading in Numbers is concerned with the authority of religious leadership, and this selection from 1 Corinthians with the many and varied roles of church members. We pray that the unity in the Spirit that Paul described will characterize also our assembly of faith.

### **Images in the Readings**

Anthropologists describe fire as one of the markers of the human species. For tens of thousands of years, humans gathered around fire for light, warmth, protection, community, and better food. Many passages in the Bible liken God to fire. The Holy Spirit of God appeared on Sinai in flames of fire, which on Pentecost appeared on the forehead of each believer. Moses experienced God in fire; through fire the Israelites presented offerings to God; God led the people through the wilderness with a pillar of fire. Seraphim are fire-spirits, extensions of the divine. Yet fire is also a sign of divine judgment: the angel in Eden hides the tree of life from humanity with a sword of fire, and John the Baptist predicts that fire will consume the chaff. Fire both occasions human life and has the power to destroy. Think fire, think God.

The Hebrew noun *ruah* can be translated into English as spirit, breath, or wind. Spirit is the most amorphous of these words. In Christian theology, the Spirit that we experience is the Spirit of the risen Christ, a spirit of service, a spirit of love, a spirit of resurrection beyond death.

In the narrative in Numbers, seventy elders receive the Spirit. In the Bible, seventy is a number that connotes totality, seven times ten. In Genesis 10, there are seventy nations in Israel's world; Jacob moves to Egypt with seventy family members; and there are many more seventies. Luke says that seventy were sent out to preach the word.

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