



*Christ the King
Sunday, November 23, 2025*



BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN CHURCH

48 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY ~ (585) 223-0634 ~ www.blcfairport.org

PRELUDE

Rejoice! The Lord Is King

(DARWALL - Before You, Lord, We Bow [ELW 893])

Gene Roberson
tune, John Darwall

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Advent marks the ending and beginning of the church year and during this time, we return to our foundation – GOD MATTERS. God's love and faithfulness endure through all our endings and beginnings. Our weekly scripture readings ground us in the stories of God whose was, who is, and who is to come.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Long-expected God,

to you all hearts are open, to you all desires are known. We come to you, confessing our sins. Forgive us in your mercy, and remember us in your love. Show us your ways; teach us your paths; and lead us in justice and truth, for the sake of your goodness in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness.

☩ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN	Oh, Worship the King	ELW 842
-----------------------	----------------------	---------

Stanzas 1, 2: All

3: Choir

4, 5: All

LESSONS AND HYMNS

Throughout the year, God has spoken to us through scripture readings, preaching, and song, revealing to us, Jesus, God's only son, who makes God's love and faithfulness visible for all to see!

Advent: Words for the Beginning

In Advent, we marked a season of endings and beginnings. Christ's birth ushers us into new ways of living and loving—and yet, we feel the weight of many things coming to an end. The world as we know it spins madly on. As we move through these chapters, we drew upon words for the beginning to renew us and remind us of the ways we are called to live out our faith. No matter what we face, no matter what this new day brings, love is our beginning.

LITANY

Into our world as into Mary's womb,
Into the forgotten places, as into the stable,
Come, Lord Jesus.

Into the lives of the poor, bring hope;
Into the lives of the powerful, bring caution;
Into the lives of the weary, bring rest;
Into the lives of the wise, bring restlessness;
Into our lives and longings,
Come, Lord Jesus.

Christ is coming. Blessed are those who wait.
Come quickly, humble God, and reign.

HYMN	Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus	ELW 254
------	--------------------------------	---------

Christmas

At the heart of the Christmas season lies the simple message that God comes to us revealed in human flesh and blood. We may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

READING: John 1:1-5

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

HYMN	Love Has Come	ELW 292
-------------	----------------------	----------------

Stanzas 1: Women

2: Men

3: All

Epiphany

As Jesus ministry begins, the power of God is revealed in unexpected ways. At his baptism, throughout his ministry, and again on the mountaintop, God's message to us is clear: This is my son. Listen to him.

READING: Luke 4:14-21

¹⁴ Then Jesus, in the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding region. ¹⁵ He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

¹⁶ When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free those who are oppressed,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

HYMN	Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness	ELW 843
-------------	--	---------

Lent: Jesus: A Way in the Wilderness

Wilderness is the place where we don't know which way to go, where we don't know what comes next, where the usual supports have disappeared. Wilderness is a place where we may feel unmoored, directionless, lost, uncertain, where hard work and traps seem to appear around each new corner. In the wilderness we encounter Jesus, making a way for us.

READING: Isaiah 43:16-21

¹⁶ Thus says the LORD,

who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters,

¹⁷ who brings out chariot and horse,
army and warrior;

they lie down; they cannot rise;

they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:

¹⁸ Do not remember the former things
or consider the things of old.

¹⁹ I am about to do a new thing;

now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?

I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.

²⁰ The wild animals will honor me,
the jackals and the ostriches,

for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,

to give drink to my chosen people,

²¹ the people whom I formed for myself
so that they might declare my praise.

Stanzas 1: Cantor
2, 3, 4: All

Easter: Wilderness Transformed

The empty tomb of Easter reveals what God has been showing us all along – I’m still here. I’m still with you. Your present wilderness doesn’t lie beyond my presence. To our ancient ancestors, God spoke the divine promise of a wilderness transformed into a new heaven and a new earth – a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. From of old, God has promised that the wilderness places of our lives will become a garden where God’s presence is revealed among us in the risen Christ!

READING: John 20:1-2, 11–16, 18

¹ Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ² So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” . . .

¹¹ Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb, ¹² and she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” ¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). . . . ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Pentecost

In this long, unfolding season, we follow Jesus as he reveals God's way of love, Jesus teaches us how deeply the created world matters to God. God knows every bit of you and loves you. Claimed by God in the waters of baptism and fed at Christ's table of mercy, YOU MATTER! God is still shaping us – individually and as a community of faith.

READING: Jeremiah 18:1-6

¹ The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: ² “Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words.” ³ So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. ⁴ The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

⁵ Then the word of the Lord came to me: ⁶ Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the Lord. Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.

HYMN	In Christ Called to Baptize	ELW 575, sts. 1, 3, 4
-------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------

Reign of Christ Sunday

Jesus, God's only son, makes God's love and faithfulness visible for all to see! Not through power and might, but enthroned on a cross, through mercy.

READING: Luke 23:33-43

³³ When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ [[Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”]] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. ³⁵ And the people stood by watching, but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!” ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine ³⁷ and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!” ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?” ⁴¹ And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting

what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.”⁴² Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom.”⁴³ He replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

OFFERING OF MUSIC

Holy Is Your Name

words, Don Besig and Nancy Price

music, Don Besig

The Chancel Choir

SHARING GOD’S MEAL

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Our prayers are always offered on behalf of the whole community.

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

#1 We pray for the church in the world, its leaders, and its mission to share the good news of healing and restoration. Inspire us to embody the beloved community in ways that faithfully witness to the Holy Spirit. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#2 We pray for the trembling mountains and glad streams of creation. Preserve and renew your coastlines, deep seas, forests, and grasslands. Guide all who tend flocks or care for creatures of all kinds. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#3 We pray for leaders and advocates in government, civic life, and public safety. Support equity across the globe, and heal division with accountability and truth. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We give thanks for those who work to feed the world, including farmers, agricultural workers, ranchers, commercial fishermen, food pantry staff and administrators of hunger relief programs such as ELCA World Hunger; and for our siblings in faith in our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. May our partnerships remind us of your abundance. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We know that all people matter in your eyes and you know their cares and concerns, their hopes and joys. We pray for those whose needs are known to us.

We pray for those who grieve, especially the family and friends of:

- Nick G, friend of the Merges family, who died on 10/29

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Owen, grandson of Cathy F's friend, diagnosed with brain tumor
- Mark F. who is recovering from his recent hospitalization
- Erin S, who is recovering from surgery on 11/10
- Joan, cousin of GerryAnn W, who is recovering from eye surgery on 11/12
- Dottie, mother of Alli O, who recovering after hospitalization

Hear the names of those we raise to you in our hearts or on our voice.

Silence for individual prayer.

God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.
Amen.

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Share the peace in a way that cares for friend and neighbor. If you worship virtually, share the peace through the comments section or text

OFFERING

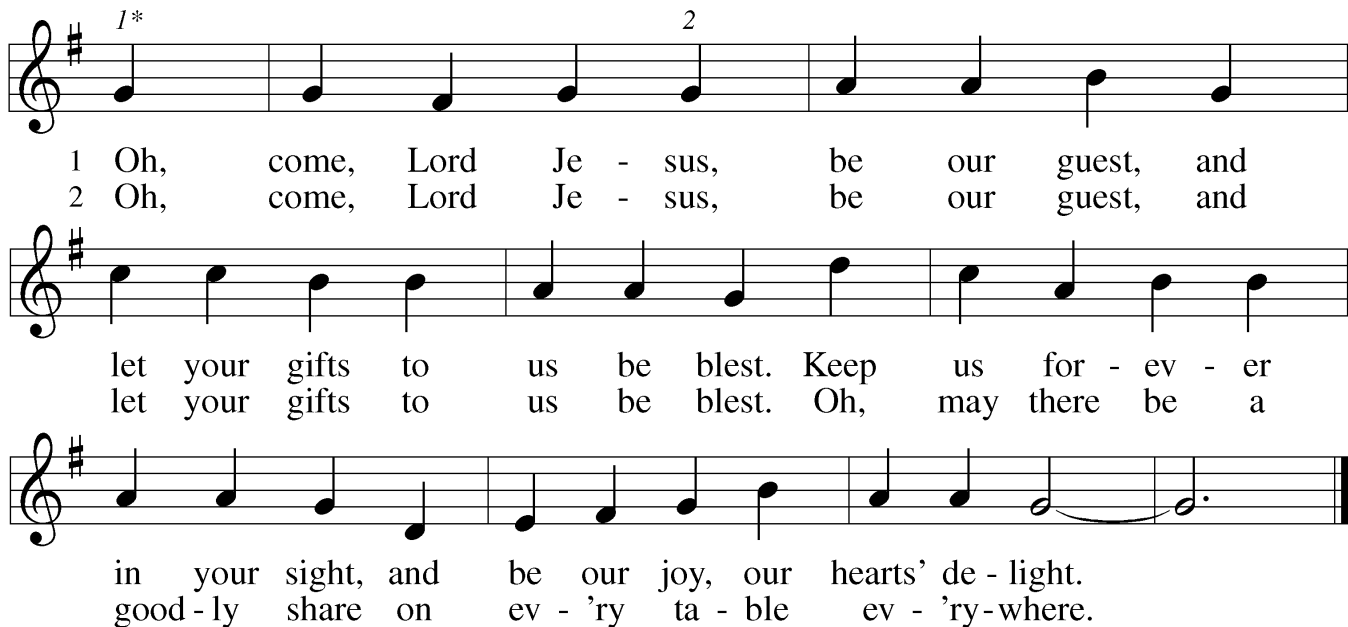
Thank you for your offerings that support the ongoing ministry that we share. Information about supporting Bethlehem's ministry with your offerings is available in the Welcome insert in your pew rack or by visiting blcfairport.org/support-our-ministry or scan the QR (quick response) code on the right and you'll be brought to BLC's mobile giving page.



DEDICATION OF SATCHELS FOR SEAFARERS

OFFERTORY

1* 2



1 Oh, come, Lord Je - sus, be our guest, and
2 Oh, come, Lord Je - sus, be our guest, and
let your gifts to us be blest. Keep us for - ev - er
let your gifts to us be blest. Oh, may there be a
in your sight, and be our joy, our hearts' de - light.
good - ly share on ev - 'ry ta - ble ev - 'ry - where.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Nourishing God,
you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

As we gather at Christ's table of mercy, the Spirit and the church cry out:

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

All those who await his appearance pray:

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

The whole creation pleads:

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Long-expected Jesus, we come to your table and ask you to meet us here.
Open our hearts to believe that you come to us in this meal of grace. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

In fervent hope, we raise our voices in prayer as Jesus taught us.

**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**

INVITATION

Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.
Thanks be to God.

DISTRIBUTION

*All are welcome at Christ's table. Our communion bread is gluten-free,
unless noted by the pastor. Grape juice is available; indicate your need to
the communion assistant.*

THE COMMUNION



O Lamb of God you take a-way our sin; have mer-cy on us, give_ us your
peace. Pre -pare us to re - ceive_ your grace and teach us how to fol - low your ways. Re-
joice! Re - joice! E - man - u - el has come to you, O Is - ra - el.

COMMUNION HYMNS

Sing to the Lord of Harvest
For the Fruit of All Creation

ELW 694
ELW 679

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

May God who comes among us, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Now Thank We All Our God

ELW 840

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Make your heart ready.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Toccata on “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

(OLD HUNDREDTH)

Michael Burkhardt
tune, Louis Bourgeois

Augsburg Fortress resources are being livestreamed by permission. All rights reserved.
From *Sundays and Seasons.com*. Copyright 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #43732.

Permission to stream and print the music in this service obtained from One License under Annual License #A-724002
New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

“Kyrie” – based on Jefferson; Music: W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835; Text: adapt. David Eck; Text © 2011 David Eck

“Word of God, Come Down on Earth” Text: James Quinn; Music: Johann R. Ahle

Text © James Quinn, SJ, (adm. Selah Publishing Co., Inc.)

“Come, Lord Jesus” Text: traditional table prayer, adapt. Susan Briehl; Music: tallis’ canon, Thomas Tallis

Text © 1996 Augsburg Fortress

“Lamb of God” – based on VENI, EMMANUEL; Music: French processional, 15th cent.

Text: adapt. David Eck; Text © 2011 David Eck

“Rejoice! The Lord Is King” Music: Gene Roberson; Tune: John Darwall – DARWALL © 2018 Gene Roberson Music

“Holy Is Your Name” Words: Don Besig and Nancy Price (ASCAP); Music: Don Besig (ASCAP)

© 2010 Hal Leonard Corporation

“Toccata on *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*” Music: Michael Burkhardt

Tune: Louis Bourgeois – OLD HUNDREDTH © 1989 MorningStar Music Publishers

BLC Pastors

The Rev. Abigail Zang Hoffman and The Rev. Amy Walter-Peterson, co-Pastors

BLC Musicians

Raelynn Clare, Music Director and Organist

Chrisanne Gates, Chancel Choir Director

Rich Towsley, Director of The Folk Group and BLC Dulcimers

Additional musical leadership provided by:

Sue Cardinal, flute

Kathy Moragne, cantor

Neil Vokes, percussion

Thank you to all those who participated in worship this Sunday! Want to learn more about what roles are needed in worship or sign-up for a pre-scheduled role? Talk with one of the pastors following worship or send an email to volunteersupport@blcfairport.org and we'll follow up!

Communicate with us: Share more about who you are, request further information, or leave a prayer request or comment through our website - <https://blcfairport.org/share-in-worship/> - scroll down the page to request or share information.

What's happening at BLC this week? Visit the Calendar of Events at www.blcfairport.org. Zoom links for virtual meetings are also found there. If you would like to schedule a meeting or event, please email the church office at office@blcfairport.org or visit <https://blcfairport.org/blc-facility-request/>

Church office hours: Sandy Squires holds office hours on Wednesdays from 9-1 and is responsive to phone and email Monday through Friday during usual business hours. Please communicate your needs through the church office by phone (585) 223-0634 or by email office@blcfairport.org. Our co-Pastors are available Sunday – Thursday and on-call for emergencies. Contact them directly to schedule an appointment either by calling the church office or emailing pastor.hoffman@blcfairport.org or pastor.amy@blcfairport.org

Support Groups

Meet every two Tuesdays



**GRIEF SUPPORT
GROUP,
11 AM**



**LIFE
HAPPENS
SUPPORT
GROUP,
2 PM**

Next Meeting - December 2

Longest Night Service

Thursday, December 18

This service makes space for difficult emotions like grief and anxiety during the holiday season.

If you have lost a loved one, feel weighed down by worry, or if Christmas is a challenging season for you, this service is for you. Sanctuary opens at 6:30 pm for quiet reflection.

Worship begins at 7:00 pm and includes prayer, communion, and candle lighting.



Who Is Jesus?

Jesus' true identity seems to remain a mystery for most of the disciples. Jesus can teach, preach, heal, cast out demons, challenge authority and more, but still they do not comprehend. You might say it is a case of mistaken identity as the disciples and other followers seem to be hoping to discover something very different from the real Jesus. It is the criminal executed with Jesus who in his dying desperation says, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Clearly, the criminal has no other hope, still in this moment he acknowledges Jesus' true identity.

Modern followers of Jesus resemble those ancient followers in many ways. Everyone has their own image of Jesus, the gifts we want Jesus to bring us, the ways we want Jesus to fix those things in our lives that cause pain or suffering. In our anxiety we want Jesus to be our magical savior. It can be frustrating when we discover a very different Jesus. Instead of one who fixes everything in an instant, Jesus is the one who walks with us through the darkest valleys. Jesus is the one who calls us to lives of service—and again and again as we care for the needs of others we discover the face of Jesus himself in the lost, the last, and the least.

Our sin gets in the way, yet those who profess Jesus as Christ the King—the one in whom the fullness of God was pleased to dwell—are forever seeking to be clear in heart, mind, and soul about the true nature of his identity, and how we can share that identity with others.