

A CITY BUILT ON A HILL CANNOT BE HID

MATTHEW 5:14

*Sunday, February 8, 2026
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany*



BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

PRELUDE

Ein feste Burg

(A Mighty Fortress)

Jan Bender

tune, Martin Luther

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Light shines in the darkness for the upright, the psalmist sings. Isaiah declares that when we loose the bonds of injustice and share our bread with the hungry, the light breaks forth like the dawn. In another passage from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, the light of the world, calls his followers to let the light of their good works shine before others. Through baptism we are sent into the world to shine with the light of Christ.

GATHERING

CONFESSİON AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, \dagger one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters.

Amen.

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Mighty God, lover of justice,
we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.
Amen.

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ, and forgives your sin in \dagger Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace.

Amen.

GREETING

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.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Sanna, Sannanina

Sandra Eithun

(Holy, Most Holy Lord)

tune, South African traditional

The Chancel Bells

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Lord God, with endless mercy you receive the prayers of all who call upon you. By your Spirit show us the things we ought to do, and give us the grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

HEARING GOD'S WORD**DISMISSAL TO WORSHIP FOR KIDS AND JOY!**

All kids ages 3 through elementary are welcome to a special time of hearing the Word, conversation and activity! Parents can remain in the sanctuary while the kids gather in designated spaces. Worship for Kids (Ages 3 – Grade 2) meets across the hall from the sanctuary and JOY! (Grades 3 – 5) meets downstairs. Kids will return during the offering so they can participate in Communion.

READING: Isaiah 58:1-12

Shortly after the return of Israel from exile in Babylon, the people were troubled by the ineffectiveness of their fasts. God reminds them that outward observance is no substitute for genuine fasting that results in acts of justice, such as feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, and clothing the naked.

¹ Shout out; do not hold back!

 Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion,
 to the house of Jacob their sins.

² Yet day after day they seek me

 and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness
 and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments;
 they want God on their side.

³ “Why do we fast, but you do not see?

 Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day
 and oppress all your workers.

⁴ You fast only to quarrel and to fight
 and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today
 will not make your voice heard on high.

⁵ Is such the fast that I choose,
 a day to humble oneself?

Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush
 and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Will you call this a fast,
 a day acceptable to the LORD?

⁶ Is not this the fast that I choose:
 to loose the bonds of injustice,
 to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
 and to break every yoke?

⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
 and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them
 and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
 and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you;

the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

^{9a} Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, "Here I am."

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

¹⁰ if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.

¹¹ The LORD will guide you continually
and satisfy your needs in parched places
and make your bones strong,
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water
whose waters never fail.

¹² Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 5:13-20

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus encourages his followers to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, doing good works and keeping God's commandments..

[Jesus said:] ¹³“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵ People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

¹⁷“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The Folk Groups: st. 1

All: sts. 2, 3, 4



1. You are salt for the earth, O people:
 2. You are a light on the hill, O people:
 3. You are a seed of the Word, O people:
 4. We are a blest and a pilgrim people:



Salt for the King-dom of God! Share the fla-vor of
 Light for the Cit-y of God! Shine so ho-ly and
 Bring forth the King-dom of God! Seeds of mer-cy and
 Bound for the King-dom of God! Love our jour-ney and

All:



life, O people: Life in the King-dom of God!
 bright, O people: Shine for the King-dom of God!
 seeds of jus-tice, Grow in the King-dom of God!
 love our home-land: Love is the King-dom of God!

Refrain



Bring forth the King-dom of mer-cy, Bring forth the



King-dom of peace; Bring forth the King-dom of jus-tice,



Bring forth the Cit-y of God!

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

A brief silence.

#1 Your church does ministry in many and various ways. Keep the baptized true to the mind of Christ, that our works and witness bring hope to a troubled world.
Merciful God,
hear our prayer.

#2 Your marvelous creation cries out to you. Restore polluted air, soil, and water sources to wholeness. Guard honeybees, elephants, great whales and songbirds from harm, and renew the face of the earth. Merciful God,
hear our prayer.

#3 Your people in every nation suffer injustice, poverty, and the threat of violence. Guide those in authority to govern with compassion, and bring peace to war zones.
Merciful God,
hear our prayer.

We pray for those engaged in long-term disaster recovery operations in the Caribbean, especially our siblings in the Caribbean and Florida-Bahamas synods; and for our siblings in faith in our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. May our partnerships remind us of your abundance. Merciful God,
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 celebrate with thanksgiving upon the birth of:

- Logan Paul C, son of Liana and Eric, born 1/27/26

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Kris K, who broke her ankle while in Florida and has a long recovery
- Marie, mother-in-law of Bob and Becki P's daughter, who has been diagnosed with cancer
- Bob P. who is anticipating heart surgery
- Aiden, grandson of Jim and Donna B, who was injured in a sledding accident
- Erika J, sister of Vera P, who has begun treatment for cancer

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

Silence for individual prayer.

Merciful God,
hear our prayer.

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.

Amen.

SHARING GOD'S MEAL

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.



OFFERING OF MUSIC

Jesus Is the Light

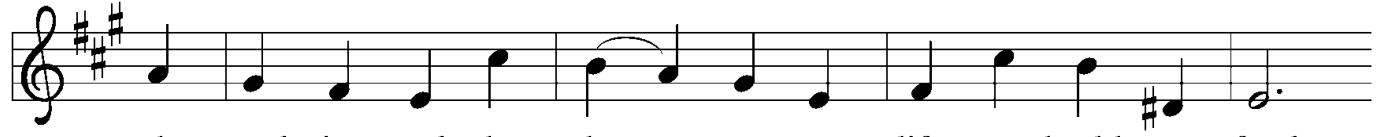
words, John 8:12, 14, ad. A. L. P.
music, Anna Laura Page

The Chancel Choir

OFFERTORY



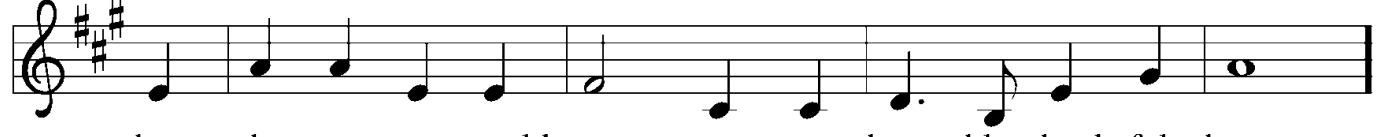
3 We thank you, our cre - a - tor, for all things bright and good,



the seed - time and the har - vest, our life, our health, our food.

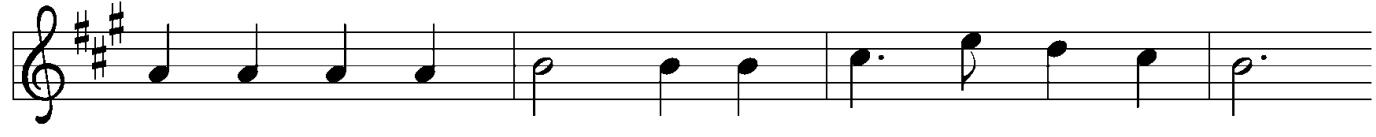


No gifts have we to of - fer for all your love im - parts,

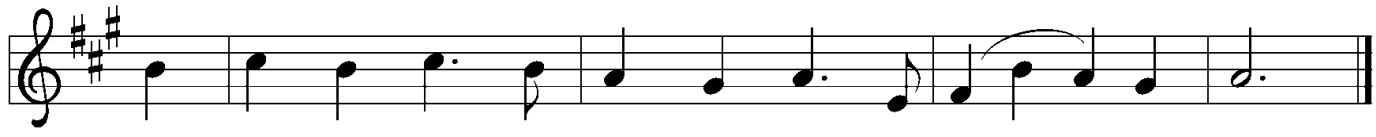


but what you most would trea - sure—our hum - ble, thank - ful hearts.

Refrain



All good gifts a - round us are sent from heav'n a - bove.



We thank you, Lord, we thank you, Lord, for all your love.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Gracious God,
you bless us with gifts of guidance, new life, growth in grace, and fruitful labor. Accept the first fruits of time and toil, field and orchard we offer here. Bless and multiply these gifts to our nurture and the care of your creation; for the sake of your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

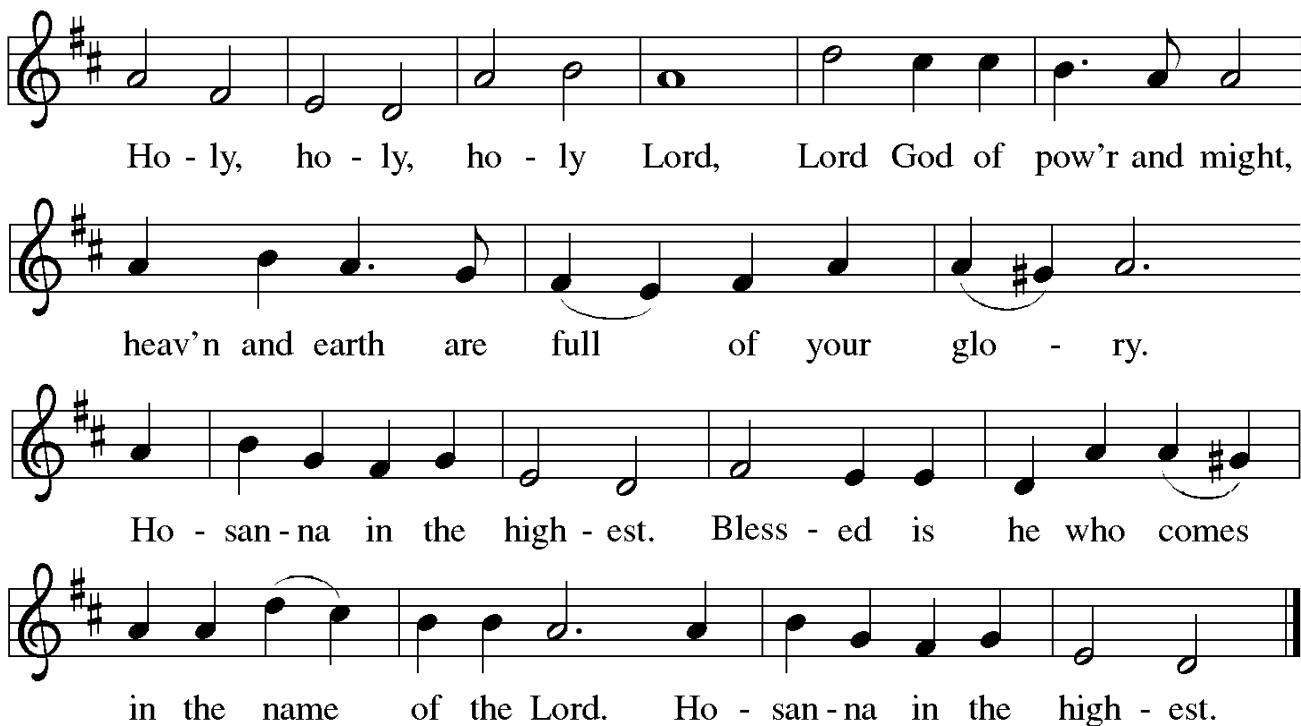
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy . . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.

Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes

in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again

Pour out your Holy Spirit in this meal,
and make us one in this community of faith and with your people throughout the world.

Glory and praise to you, O God, Author of life, Word made flesh, Power of the Most High, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

United in baptism, we pray as Jesus taught:

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 TO COMMUNION

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! Come to the table; taste and see.

Thanks be to God!

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

Our communion bread is gluten-free, unless noted by the pastor. Grape juice is available; indicate your need to the communion assistant.

THE COMMUNION

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

HYMNS FOR COMMUNION

Let Justice Flow like Streams

ELW 717

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service

ELW 712

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE

1 O Lord, now let your servant de - part in heav'n-ly peace,
2 Then grant that I may follow your gleam,O glo - rious Light,

for I have seen the glo - ry of your re - deem - ing grace:
till earth-ly shad - ows scat - ter, and faith is changed to sight;

a light to lead the na - tions un - to your ho - ly hill,
till rap - tured saints shall gath - er up - on that shin - ing shore,

the glo - ry of your peo - ple, your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
where Christ, the bless - ed day - star, shall light them ev - er - more.

LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise \pm bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

We Are Marching in the Light

ELW 866

Intro: Cantors

Stanzas: 1. All — *We are marching in the light of God*

2. All — *We are dancing ...*
3. All — *We are praying ...*
4. All — *We are singing ...*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Prelude and Fugue in F Major, BWV 556

Johann Sebastian Bach

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:

Cantors: James Berner, Dave Wideman

Percussion: Neil Vokes, Dave Wideman

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

LCLC SUMMER CAMP DATES

June 28-July 3, 2026
Family Camp and Alumni

July 5-10, 2026
Classic I & Minis

July 12-17, 2026
Classic II & Rats

July 19-24, 2026
Classic III & Rats

July 26-31, 2026
Senior High Week

August 2-7, 2026
Night Owls

More information for each program will be released
early January. Registration will open on February 1st.

Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)

SAVE THE DATE!
JULY 20-23, 2026
AT ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN IN PITTSFORD

BLC is partnering with St. Paul's, Pittsford again
for this **FREE** summer's VBS program!

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Holy Communion, Setting Four; Music: Ronald A. Nelson © 1978, 2006 Ronald Nelson (adm. Augsburg Fortress)

“We Plow the Field and Scatter” - ELW 681, stanza 3 Text: Matthias Claudius; tr. Jane M. Campbell, Music: Johann A. P. Schulz
“O Lord, Now Let Your Servant” - ELW 313 Text: Ernest E. Ryder, alt., based on the Nunc dimittis

Music: Finnish folk tune; arr. Hymn version; Text © 1925 Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America
Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress, “Ein feste Burg” – A Mighty Fortress, Tune: Martin Luther, Music: Jan Bender, © 1984 Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp.

“Sanna, Sannanina”, Tune: traditional South African, Arranger: Sandra Eithun, © 2014 Choristers Guild

“Bring Forth the Kingdom”, Text and Music: Marty Haugen, © 1986 GIA Publications

“Jesus Is the Light”, Words: John 8:12, 14 ad. A. L. P., Music: Anna Laura Page (ASCAP), © 1986 Hinshaw Music, Inc.

“Prelude and Fugue in F Major” – BWV 556, Music: Johann Sebastian Bach

It's Time to Lighten Up!

This is a strange time of year. The days are short, the nights are long, and even though we dream of more daylight, we walk around hoping against hope that there won't be enough sunshine produced for a rodent (okay, a groundhog!) to see its own shadow. A quick scan of today's news can be equally as bleak. It is time for a little more light in an otherwise dark and dreary time.

Enter Epiphany. The missional emphasis of this season shines like a beacon of light and hope in the dead of winter, bringing good news in the middle of this world's not-so-good news. This week God provides the mission in Isaiah—feed the hungry, care for the homeless, clothe the naked. Upon accomplishing this mission God tells the people, "Your light shall break forth like the dawn." Paul continues his Spirit-led mission, encouraging the church in Corinth, "No eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him." Jesus teaches his disciples, "You are the light of the world. . . . Let your light shine before others" (Matt. 5:14, 16). Through these words in Jesus' sermon, he gives followers of every day and age a mission to share the light which scatters the darkness.

Whether you are looking in the news or out the window, things may seem pretty dark and dreary at this time of year, but do not miss the light of Epiphany! We are indeed created in God's image, therefore the spark of the divine is alive in all of us. The light shines through us as we live out God's mission for our lives each day. As Epiphany continues, we should all be prepared to let our light shine and share the good news.