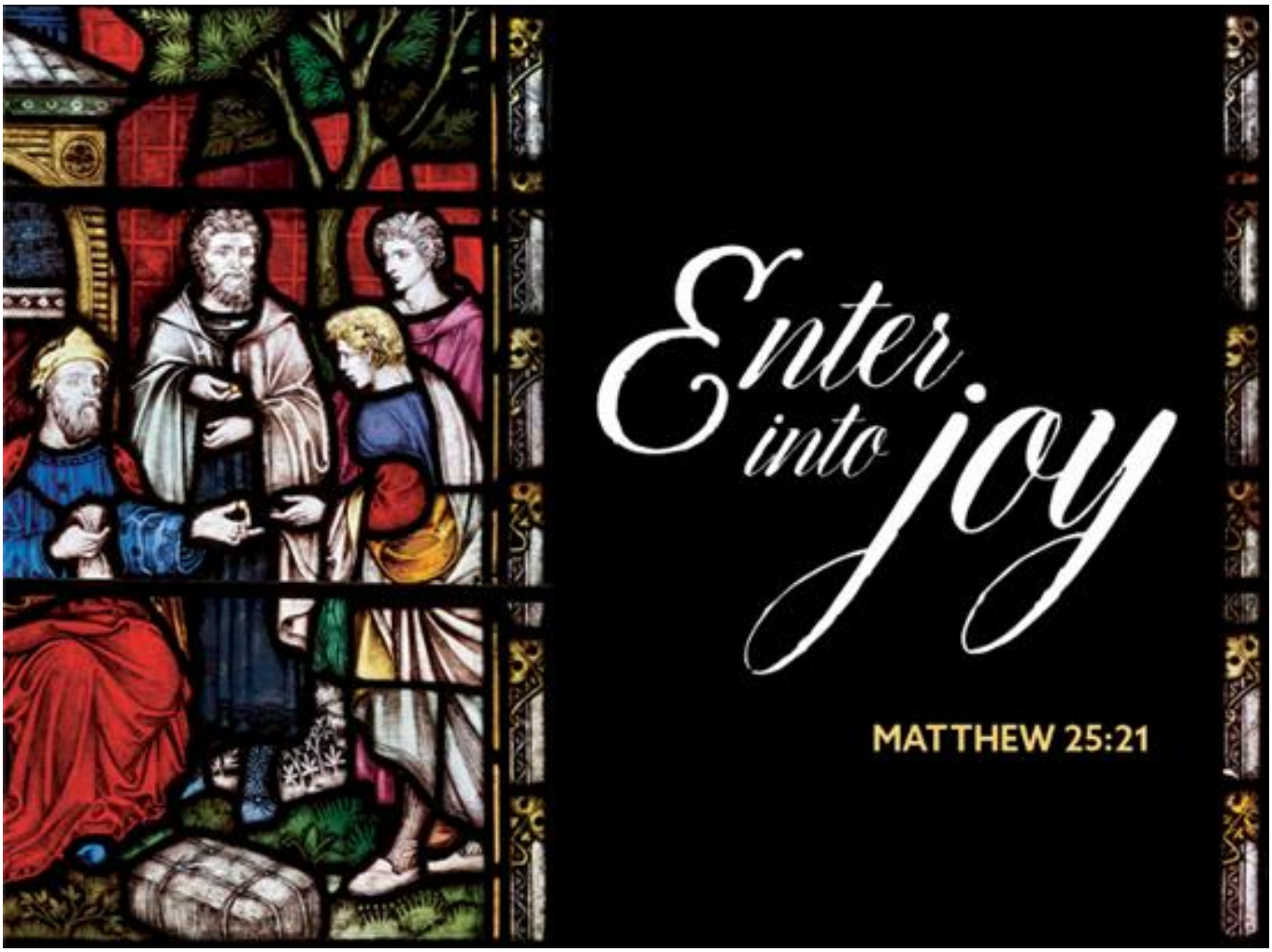


Sunday, November 15, 2026
25th Sunday after Pentecost

BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

PRELUDE
Benedictus Alec Rowley

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our readings during November speak of the end times. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread, and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.

Red hymnal - **ELW** - Evangelical Lutheran Worship Blue hymnal - **ACS** - All Creation Sings

GATHERING

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.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God,
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.

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	Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending	ELW 435

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY
Let us pray. Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC
God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me — Richard Bruxvoort Colligan
(GREEN TYLER)

The Folk Group

HEARING GOD'S WORD

DISMISSAL TO WORSHIP WITH JOY!
All kids ages 3 through grade 5 are welcome to a special worship time with a small snack and song, a time of hearing the Word, conversation and activities! Parents can remain in the sanctuary while the kids gather in designated spaces. Children will return during the offering so they can participate in Communion

READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

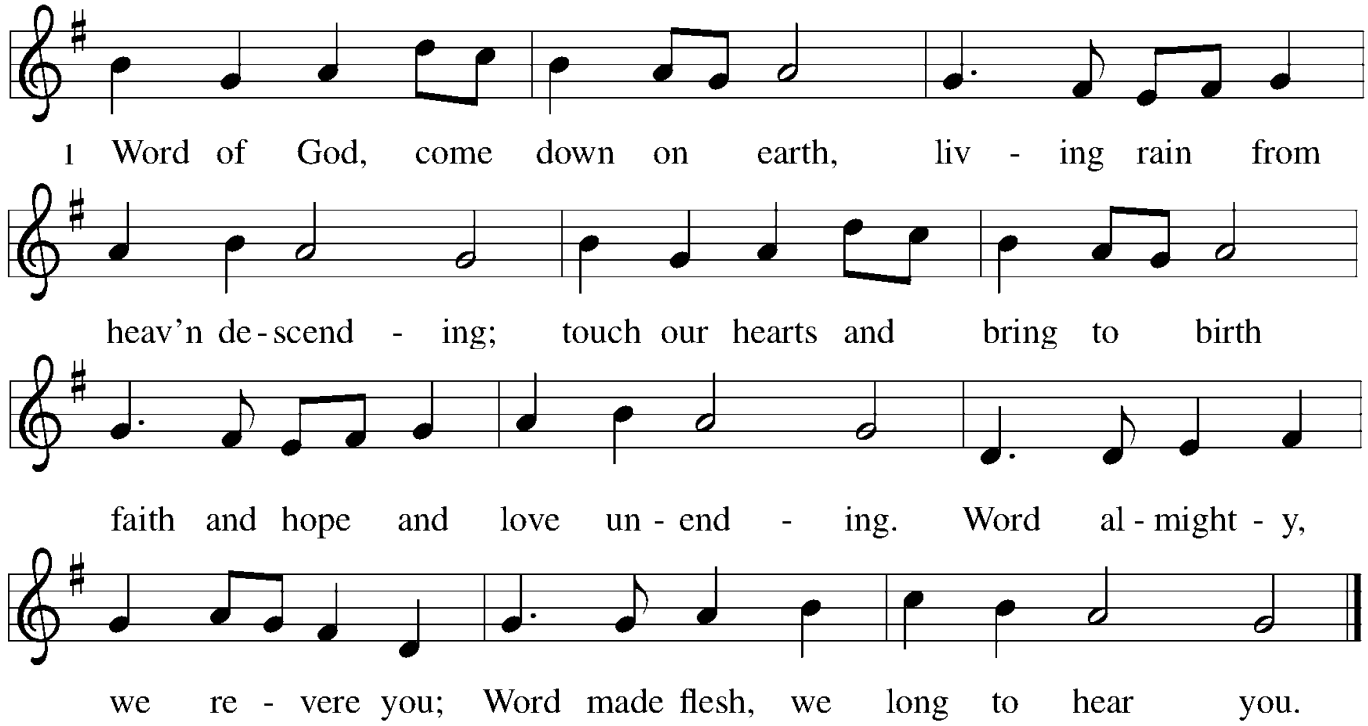
Though we do not know and cannot calculate the day of Christ's return, we live faithfully in the here and now as we anticipate the day when we will be given eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[1] Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need
to have anything written to you. [2] For you yourselves know very well that the day
of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. [3] When they say, "There is peace and
security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon
a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! [4] But you, brothers and sisters, are
not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; [5] for you are all children of
light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. [6] So, then, let
us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober, [7] for those who
sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. [8] But since we
belong to the day, let us be sober and put on the breastplate of faith and love and
for a helmet the hope of salvation. [9] For God has destined us not for wrath but for
obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, [10] who died for us, so that
whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. [11] Therefore encourage one
another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



The holy gospel according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 25:14-30

Jesus tells a parable about his second coming, indicating that it is not sufficient merely to maintain things as they are. Those who await his return should make good use of the gifts that God has provided them.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] 14 "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned
his slaves and entrusted his property to them; 15 to one he gave five talents, to
another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.
At once 16 the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them
and made five more talents. 17 In the same way, the one who had the two talents
made two more talents. 18 But the one who had received the one talent went off and
dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. 19 After a long time the
master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. 20 Then the one who
had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying,
'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more
talents.' 21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you
have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things;
enter into the joy of your master.' 22 And the one with the two talents also came
forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two
more talents.' 23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave;
you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things;
enter into the joy of your master.' 24 Then the one who had received the one talent
also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping
where you did not sow and gathering where you did not scatter, 25 so I was afraid,
and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' 26 But
his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap
where I did not sow and gather where I did not scatter? 27 Then you ought to have
invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what
was my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with
the ten talents. 29 For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have
an abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken
away. 30 As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there
will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY	As Saints of Old	ELW 695

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

United with the great cloud of witnesses, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

#1 You build up the church as a community of faithful witnesses throughout the generations. Enliven the worship, outreach, and service work of our congregations and ministries with the hope of your good news. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

#2 Rescue all nations and peoples from violence, displacement, or famine. Disrupt complacency and corruption among global, national and local leaders. Recommit all people to transforming the systems that divide and oppress into those that empower and unite. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

#3 Bless those who serve in volunteer congregational leadership: council members, finance committees, property teams, and those participating in outreach and youth ministry. Encourage healthy stewardship of time, talents, and resources for the mission of the gospel. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for young people who have no shelter or place where they feel safe, secure and cared for and for community programs and ministries that provide shelter, food, resources and support for them; and we remember our siblings in our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. In all our endeavors, remind us that we who are many, are one body in Christ. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We know that you love all people, you see our needs, and you know our cares and concerns, our hopes and joys.

We offer prayers of thanksgiving for:

- Alyssa and Sergio, married on 11/9, Alyssa is Julie O's daughter
- Jonah Douglas L, the grandnephew of Kathy M, born on 10/29

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

- Cynthia P, friend of Jim and Donna B who died on 11/3
- Karen A who died on November 4
- Jill M, friend of Mary Jane B, who died on 10/31

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Kit R, friend of Jim and Donna B, who has ended treatments for cancer
- Nancy P, hospitalized with an infection
- David S, younger brother of Bob S, who suffered a stroke on 10/29
- Mark F, who is recovering from a cardiac procedure on 11/6

Hear these concerns we raise in our hearts or on our voice.

Silence for individual prayer.

God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Into your steadfast love, faithful God, we entrust all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus, your beloved.
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

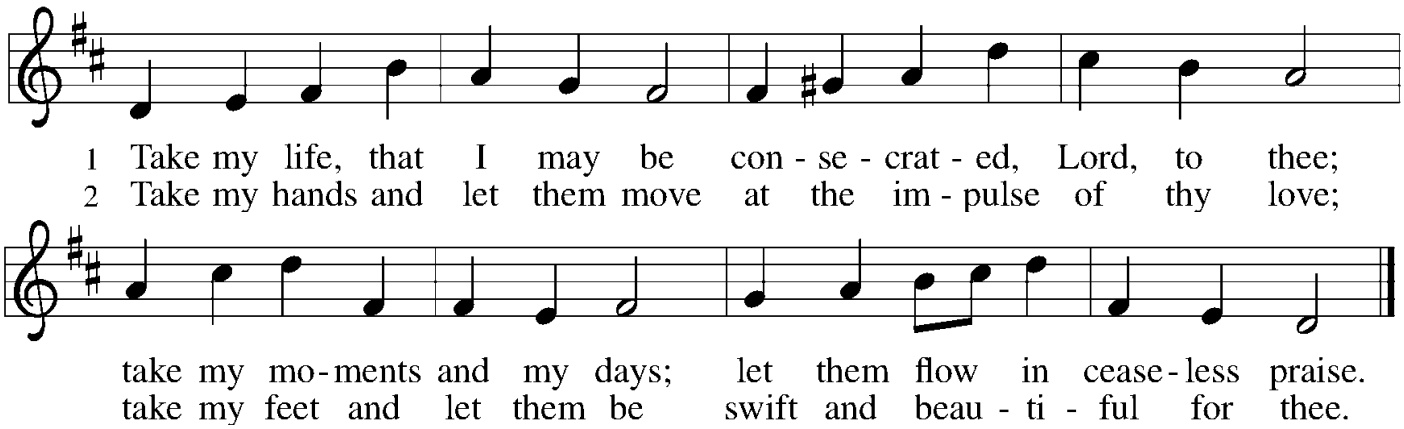
Thank you for your offerings that support the ongoing ministry that we share. Information about supporting Bethlehem's ministry with your offerings is available in the Welcome insert in your pew rack or by visiting blcfairport.org/support-our-ministry or scan the QR (quick response) code on the right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

OFFERING OF MUSIC

Steal Away — Howard Helvey
text: Traditional — tune: Traditional spiritual

The Chancel Choir

OFFERTORY



OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things.
Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

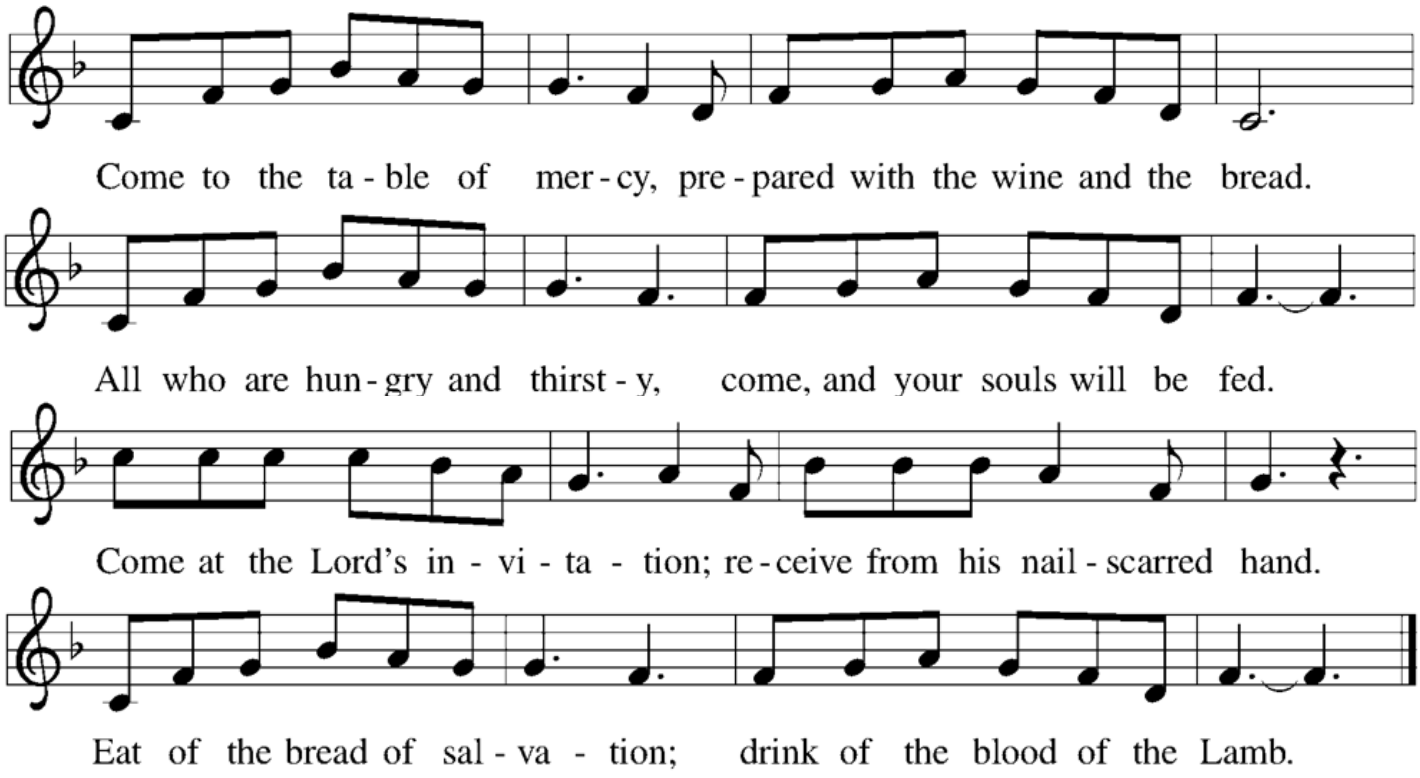
Pour out your Holy Spirit in this meal,
and make us one in this community of faith and with your people throughout the world.
Glory and praise to you, O God, Author of life, Word made flesh, Power of the Most High, now and forever.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER
One in body, one in spirit, 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
In bread and cup the reign of Christ is breaking in. Come, receive what Christ has prepared.
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



HYMNS FOR COMMUNION	
Light Dawns on a Weary World	ELW 726
Soon and Very Soon	ELW 439

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN	Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers	ELW 244

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

"Merton" Malcolm Archer
(Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding! – ELW 246) tune: William H. Monk

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:
Jane Morale, violin

Thank you Susie DePasquale for serving as our worship musician while Raelynn is away.

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



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"Glory to You, God" *All Creation Sings* – Holy Communion, Setting 12
Text: Susan Palo Cherwien; Music: J. Bert Carlson © 2020 Augsburg Fortress
"Word of God, Come Down on Earth" – WOV 612 Text: James Quinn
Music: Johann R. Ahle Text © James Quinn, SJ (adm. Selah Publishing Co., Inc.)
"Take My Life, That I May Be" – ELW 685, stt. 1, 2 Text: Frances R. Havergal, alt.
Music: William H. Havergal © 2006 Augsburg Fortress, Publishers
"Come to the Table" – ELW 481 Text: Claire Cloninger; Music: Martin J. Nystrom
© 1991 Integrity's Hosanna! Music; Juniper Landing Music (adm. Word Music)
"The Lord Now Sends Us Forth" Text: Anonymous, Central America; tr. Gerhard M. Cartford
Music: Anonymous, Central America; English text © 1998 Augsburg Fortress
"Benedictus" Music: Alec Rowley © 1931, 1959 Novello & Company, Limited © 2000 Augsburg Fortress
"God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me" Text and Music: Richard Bruxvoort Colligan
© 2004 This Here Music (adm. Augsburg Fortress)
"Steal Away" Text and tune: Traditional spiritual
Music: Howard Helvey (ascap) © 2003 Beckenhorst Press, Inc.
"Merton" – (Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding! – ELW 246)
Tune: William Henry Monk; Music: Malcolm Archer
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Awake to the Grace of God

Linked with the reading from 1 Thessalonians and Psalm 90, Jesus' parable of the talents invites a full-hearted response to God's lavish gifts of faith and purpose: "Use 'em if you've got 'em!" The people of God are meant to be engaged, alert, and ready to share what we have received from our prodigally (wastefully) generous God. While the parable has sometimes been interpreted in the context of judgment, a careful reading also spotlights the beauty of the faith-generated response to God's lavish grace.

One word for this is *stewardship*. Presented in light of God's gift of faith and purpose, this "churchy" term can today be transformed to new understanding in the proclamation of the gospel text. Instead of the weight of obligation and duty we so often associate with religion, we are invited today to another way: What does it mean to be awake to the grace of God?

On the surface Jesus' parable is a simple premise: the contrast of workers who please and workers who disappoint their master. Psalm 90 sings to us to carefully treasure our lifetimes, for there is something at stake. First Thessalonians is a letter reminding people they have exactly what they need to survive and thrive.

What does it mean to be awake to the grace of God?

In a time when so many people are discouraged with work, home, life, and church, a word from Jesus' parables may be healing, enriching, and startlingly attractive. The gospel text today is an opportunity to remind the people of God that there is a depth to faith that is sustainable. In fact, beneath the parables of Jesus is a depth it will take a lifetime to unpack.