

**Sunday, November 1 ~ All Saints Day**

*All Saints celebrates the baptized people of God, living and dead, who are the body of Christ. As November heralds the dying of the landscape in many northern regions, the readings and liturgy call us to remember all who have died in Christ and whose baptism is complete. At the Lord's table we gather with the faithful of every time and place, trusting that the promises of God will be fulfilled and that all tears will be wiped away in the new Jerusalem.*

Prelude: Five Verses on "Sanctorum meritis"

Alexandre Guilmant

Gathering Words/Welcome and Announcements

### **SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION**

*Bethlehem Lutheran has a tradition of lighting candles on the Sunday that we celebrate All Saints. These candles serve as a remembrance of loved ones who have died. We invite you to bring a candle into your worship space at home today and leave it unlit as we begin worship. There will be an opportunity during today's service for you to light this candle.*

Call to Worship:

Gracious God, we bring you the broken parts of ourselves.

**Hem us in before and behind.**

Creator God, we bring you the joyful parts of ourselves.

**Weave us together in hope and praise.**

God of new life, we bring you doubt and faith knotted up in our hearts.

**Unravel our doubt. Weave faith into our hearts. Draw us together and point us toward you.**

With all your saints in every time and place, we gather today.

**With all your saints in every time and place, we worship God.**

As we gather, we confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

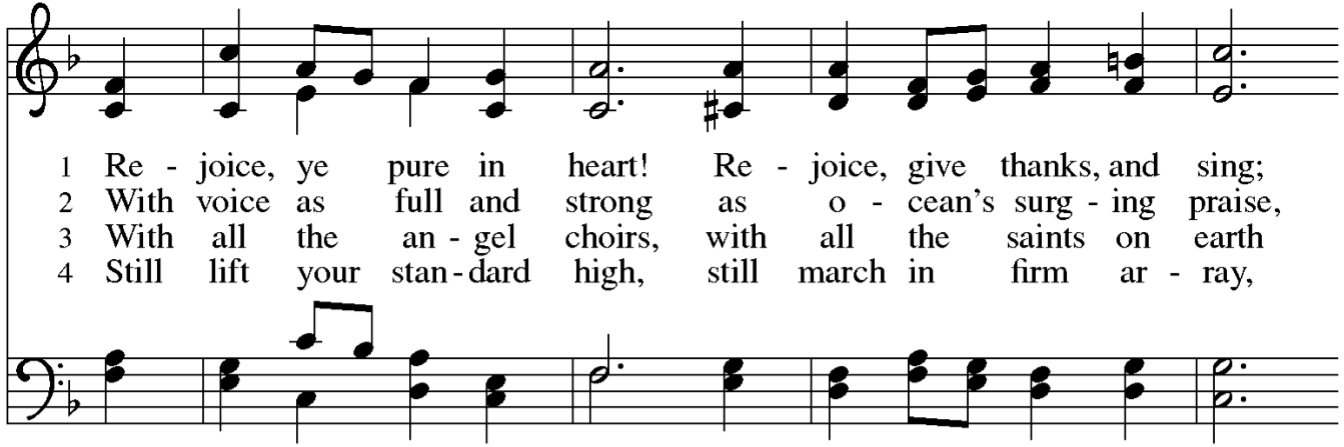
Gracious God,

**Have mercy on us. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone. Uphold us by your Spirit so that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Amen**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

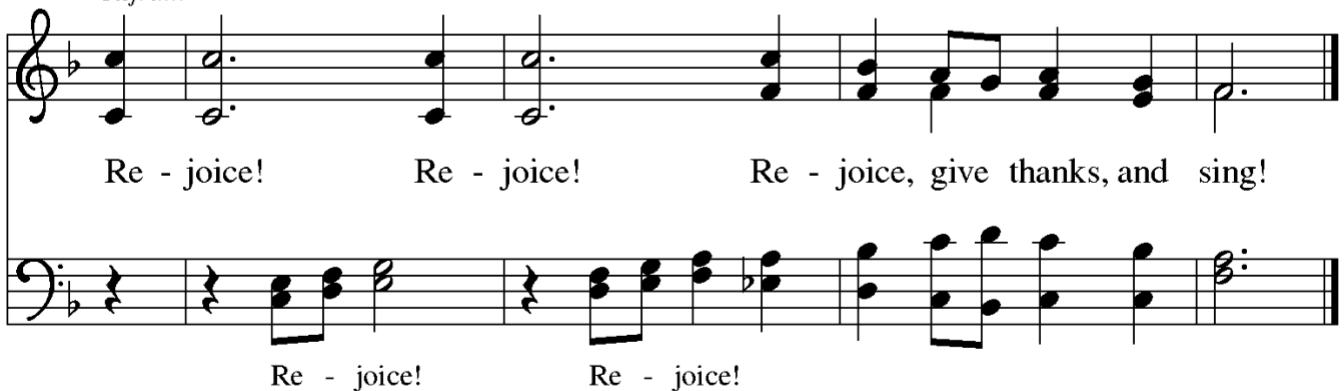
**Amen**



1 Re - joice, ye pure in heart! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing;  
 2 With voice as full and strong as o - cean's surg - ing praise,  
 3 With all the an - gel choirs, with all the saints on earth  
 4 Still lift your stan - dard high, still march in firm ar - ray,



your fes - tal ban - ner wave on high, the cross of Christ your king.  
 send forth the stur - dy hymns of old, the psalms of an - cient days.  
 pour out the strains of joy and bliss, true rap - ture, no - blest mirth.  
 as pil - grims through the dark - ness wend till dawns the gol - den day.

*Refrain*


Re - joice! Re - joice! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing!  
 Re - joice! Re - joice!

5 At last the march shall end;  
 the wearied ones shall rest;  
 the pilgrims find their home at last,  
 Jerusalem the blest. *Refrain*

6 Praise God who reigns on high,  
 the Lord whom we adore:  
 the Father, Son, and Spirit blest,  
 one God forevermore. *Refrain*

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:

Almighty God, you have knit your people together in one communion in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen**

Children's Moment

## **WE HEAR GOD'S WORD**

Psalm: Psalm 34:1-10, 22

<sup>1</sup>I will bless the Lord at all times;

the praise of God shall ever be in my mouth.

<sup>2</sup>I will glory in the Lord;

let the lowly hear and rejoice.

<sup>3</sup>Proclaim with me the greatness of the Lord;

let us exalt God's name together.

<sup>4</sup>I sought the Lord, who answered me

and delivered me from all my terrors.

<sup>5</sup>Look upon the Lord and be radiant,

and let not your faces be ashamed.

<sup>6</sup>I called in my affliction, and the Lord heard me

and saved me from all my troubles.

<sup>7</sup>The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear the Lord

and delivers them.

<sup>8</sup>Taste and see that the Lord is good;

happy are they who take refuge in God!

<sup>9</sup>Fear the Lord, you saints of the Lord,

for those who fear the Lord lack nothing.

<sup>10</sup>The lions are in want and suffer hunger,

but those who seek the Lord lack nothing that is good.

<sup>22</sup>O Lord, you redeem the life of your servants,

and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.

Reading: 1 John 3:1-3

*A saint is one who has been set apart by God for God's purposes. God, out of divine love, set us apart to be the children of God. Our holy hope is that we shall see God as God really is.*

<sup>1</sup>See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. <sup>2</sup>Beloved, we are

God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. <sup>3</sup>And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Gospel Acclamation:

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is a simple, joyful tune. The first staff ends with a double bar line, and the second staff continues the melody and also ends with a double bar line. The lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.' are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllable placement.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

*In the Beatitudes, Jesus provides a unique description of those who are blessed with God's favor. His teaching is surprising and shocking to those who seek wealth, fame, and control over others.*

<sup>1</sup>When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup>“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup>“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup>“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup>“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup>“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

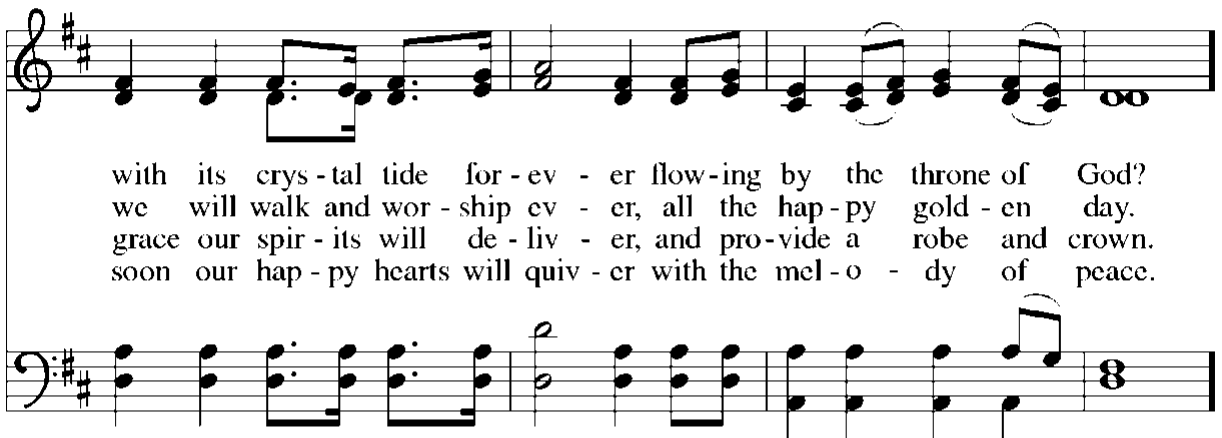
The Gospel of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

Sermon

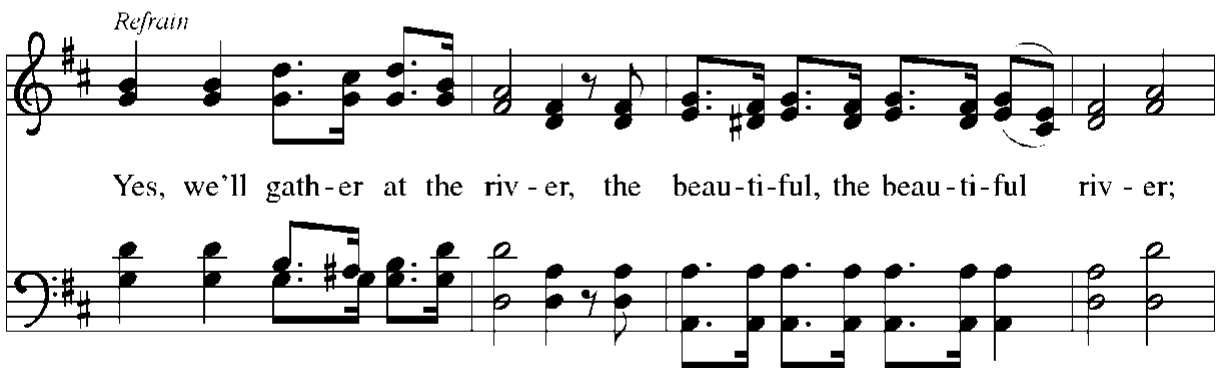


1 Shall we gath - er at the riv - er, where bright an - gel feet have trod,  
 2 On the mar - gin of the riv - er, wash - ing up its sil - ver spray,  
 3 Ere we reach the shin - ing riv - er, lay we ev - 'ry bur - den down;  
 4 Soon we'll reach the shin - ing riv - er, soon our pil - grim - age will cease;




with its crys - tal tide for - ev - er flow - ing by the throne of God?  
 we will walk and wor - ship ev - er, all the hap - py gold - en day.  
 grace our spir - its will de - liv - er, and pro - vide a robe and crown.  
 soon our hap - py hearts will quiv - er with the mel - o - dy of peace.

*Refrain*



Yes, we'll gath - er at the riv - er, the beau - ti - ful, the beau - ti - ful riv - er;



gath - er with the saints at the riv - er that flows by the throne of God.

Apostles Creed:

In Christ, you have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

**We believe in him and are marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.**

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

The Prayers of the People:

*In the silences of our prayer you are encouraged to remember those whose needs are known to us listed below. You may also lift up the name of someone in need of prayer in the comments of our worship livestream.*

Though physically distant, you call us into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

We pray for the Saints of the world and of all time. Lord, we thank you for the gift of those who came before us, those that have raised, guided, taught and lead us through all things wonderful and things challenging. We pray that we might remember that guidance and leadership through our current challenges of a worldwide pandemic and struggles of leading human populations throughout the world. Hear us, O God:

**Your mercy is great.**

We ask for your Holy Spirit Lord, to be present with all in our country at a time when forces with motivations of divisiveness would pit us against each other. We know that you, Lord can see and cross all cultures to achieve acceptance and inclusion, regardless of origin, race, gender and political opinion to acquire common human values. Come to us all. Lord Hear us, O God:

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for the congregation of Bethlehem and for your church around the world. We are thankful for our church council and pastoral leadership for their continuous efforts to provide the mission of our congregation to us in so many ways during a time of great challenge. Today we pray for these members and friends of Bethlehem and their families: Patrick & Ann, Liam, Bryce, Chester, Grace, Mike & Bailey (Connor & Merrin), Russ & Susan. We also pray for our sisters and brothers in our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. Hear us, O God:

**Your mercy is great.**

Dear God, we pray for the needs of our families at home, at church and in our communities.

*We lift up prayers of thanksgiving for:*

- Erik who begins a new position in the Emergency Preparedness Branch at the Advanced Training Center in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia on November 8, 2020. We pray for Erik, Carla, Annelise and Allie as they transition to their new home.

So many are challenged with illness, loneliness, loss, mental illness and specifically the affects of this pandemic. We pray for those whose needs are known to us in our family today.

*Silence for prayer*

*We pray for those who are grieving, especially the family and friends of:*

- Merlin who died on 10/20
- Anna who died on 10/17

*Those in need of healing, especially:*

- Ed (neighbor of Bob & Phyllis) who is hospitalized with pneumonia
- Trace (3 year old grandson of Jan & Howard) who is recovering from surgery on 10/22
- Waverly (friend of Phyllis) recovering at home and still seeking a kidney donor
- Those impacted by fires, hurricanes and other disasters
- Those who are involved with the ongoing work of caregiving for loved ones
- Those who are infected with the Coronavirus and their caregivers
  - Mary
  - Phyllis, mother of Paulette's sister-in-law

Hear us, O God:

**Your mercy is great.**

Oh, God our creator, we pray for peace.

Hear us, O God:

**Your mercy is great.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## WE SHARE GOD'S MEAL

The Peace:

Giving thanks that we become brothers and sisters in Christ through the gift of baptism, we share God's peace with one another. May the peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*Greet those with whom you worship physically with a sign of peace, extend the peace of Christ through the comments section or text to those who are at a distance.*

Offering

*Though we meet virtually, the ministry of God's people at BLC continues.*

*Our worship is complete when we bring all of our resources to receive God's blessing and fulfill God's purpose. This time of uncertainty and reduced physical contact gives us ever more opportunities to share our abundance – of compassion, of time, and of material resources. If you are able, please continue your financial commitment to BLC.*

*If you would like to make a one-time gift electronically, scan the QR (quick response) code on the right and you'll be brought to BLC's mobile giving page. For recurring gifts, download the Tithe.ly app. Checks may also be mailed to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 48 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY 14450.*



*Whatever form your offering takes, we give thanks to God for you and your generosity.*

Offering of Music:

Be Not Afraid

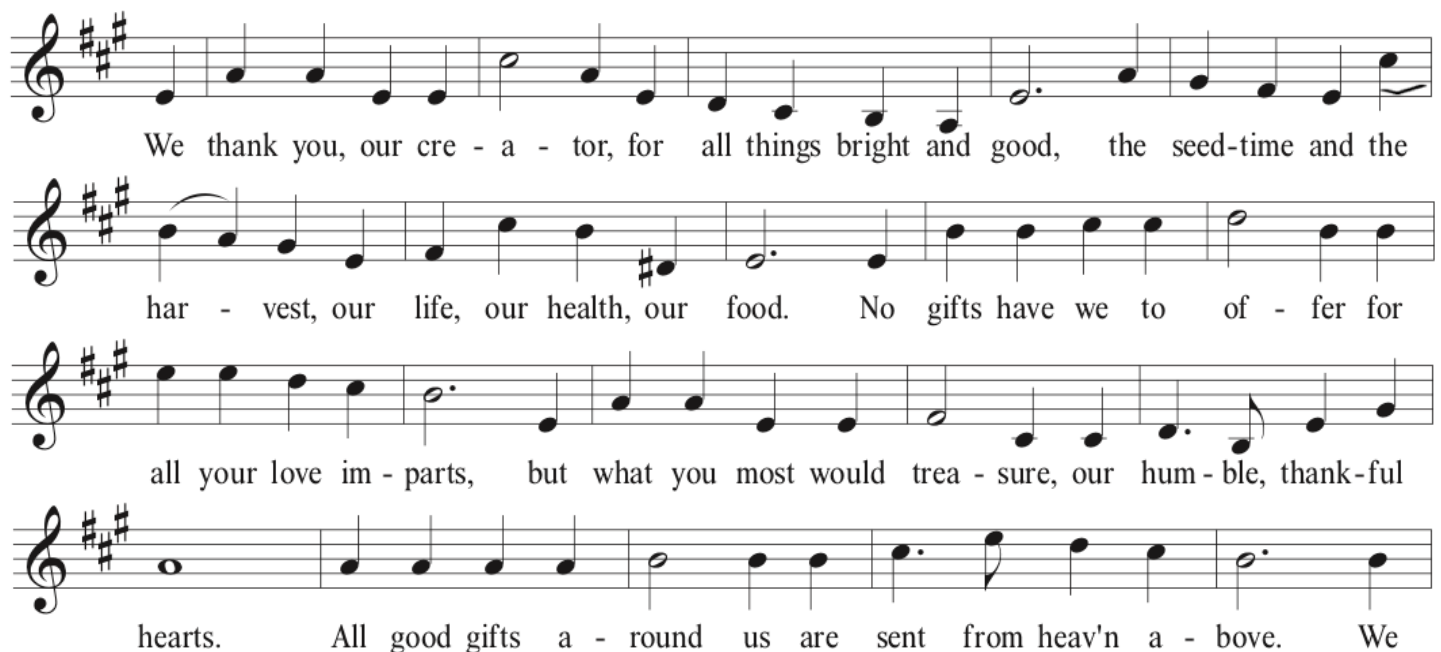
Lee and Susan Dengler

*Chancel Choir (Director, Jim Jefferis; with Jane Morale, violin)*

Offertory:

*We Plow the Fields and Scatter*

#681 vs. 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. All good gifts a - round us are sent from heav'n a - bove. We





Offertory Prayer:

Let us pray. God of all goodness,

**generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant. Amen.**

Eucharistic Prayer:

With all the saints of Africa and Asia, India and the islands, Europe and the Americas,

**we praise you, O God, for you create the worlds.**

With all the baptized, the old and the young, the weak and the strong, the famous and the forgotten,

**we bless you, O God, for you provide us with water and food.**

With all the faithful in cities and on farms, in mansions and huts, past and present,

**we worship you, O God, for you shelter the generations.**

With all your holy people, those who ministered in the church, those who served the poor, and all who walked the way of the cross,

**we glorify you, O God, for in Jesus you journeyed with us on earth.**

With Paul and the evangelists, we remember the meal of your Son:

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

With Peter and all the martyrs, we honor Christ's death, saying Amen. **Amen!**

With Mary Magdalene and all the apostles, we proclaim his resurrection, shouting Amen. **Amen!**

With John and all the theologians and mystics, we look for his returning, pleading Amen. **Amen.**

With Mary and all who sang of your greatness,

**we pray for the power of the Spirit.**

Visit this gathering, this bread and this cup,

with the presence of the body and blood of Christ.

**Form us into a communion of service,**

**and infuse your earth with the wholeness we seek.**

With grandparents and godparents, with the church universal,

and especially with the beloved saints,  
**lead us to a future we cannot yet see,  
and at the end draw all humanity to yourself.**

Now with all of the family you saved by your love,  
**we shout blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and might,  
be to our God forever and ever. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer:

Gathered into one by the Holy 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:

Come, take your place at the feast.

**Thanks be to God!**

***For all the saints . . .***

*Today, we give thanks to God for all those who have died in Christ. We thank God for all the ways that they have shared God's love with us and passed along the faith to us. As we worship, we remember that we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, and that through baptism, we are forever a part of God's family and one another's lives. The names of those known to us are spoken and a bell rung in their memory.*

*Distribution of Communion:*

*All are welcome to share in Christ's meal of forgiveness and grace. We invite you to make your way to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 48 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY until 11 am this morning. All participants are expected to wear masks. When you arrive, please use the main entrance of the church and ushers will direct you to the communion table. Those who need the assistance of the lift are welcome to use the Perrin Street entrance. When you are ready to receive the bread and wine, you may remove your mask. Children and others do not commune are welcome to come forward for a blessing. Gluten-free wafers and grape juice are available; please indicate your need to the worship assistant.*

*When you have received communion, you are invited to conclude today's liturgy with your household.*

Table Blessing:

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

Post-Communion Prayer:

Lord Jesus, in this simple meal you have set a banquet. Sustain us on the journey, strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children, and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on the way. Amen.

Blessing:

May the God of all creation, in whose image we are made,  
who claims us and calls us beloved, who strengthens us for service,  
give you reason to rejoice and be glad!

The blessing of God, Sovereign, ✝ Savior, and Spirit,  
be with you today and always. Amen.

*Sunday, November 1, 2020 ~ For all the Saints...  
We give thanks and praise to God for their life and witness.*

*We remember these family and friends of BLC members  
who have died since All Saints' Day 2019.*

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*Andy (father of scout Chloe Laluk, Troop 2019)*

*Lee Arcaro (family friend of Gabriele and Frank Nardozzi)*

*Glen Bastian (friend of Becki & Bob Purvis)*

*Paul Bishop (brother-in-law of Paulette Costanza)*

*Hudson Buckles (infant son of Kyle & MacKensie, a former student of Phyllis Stock)*

*Linda Bulman (mother Andrea Purvis' friend Amanda)*

*Barbara Burt (cousin of Laurie Perry)*

*Bob Care (cousin of Phyllis Stock)*

*Peter Castronovo (friend of Howard & Jan Sharp)*

*Angelina Costanza (mother of John Costanza)*

*Ken Cross*

*Sally Cross*

*Teri Wiedner Dahlen*

*Mary Derrenbacher (cousin of Toni Thompson)*

*Jeremy Duntley (teacher in Pittsford)*

*Gerald Edwards (brother-in-law of Sheillee Weidner)*

*Rose Ekegren (aunt and godmother of Kay Slattery)*

*Ginny Furlow (cousin of Pat Egbert)*

*Grace Garvey*

*Patricia Gigstead (mother of Melissa Kelbe)*

*David Goodsell (father of Ken & grandfather of Jillian)*

*Beverly Grozek (Aunt of Ron Meier)*

*Shirley Hahn (mother of Dave Hahn)*

*D. Alan Hershey (father of Kathy Forney's sons Dan & Dave Hershey)*

*Paula Hitchings*

*Ed Hitchings, Jr (son of Paula Hitchings)*

*Judy Hodge (mother of Tim Victor, Mary DePasquale's boyfriend)*

*Jackie Horn (aunt of Patty Chaffee)*

*George Keep (father of Kelly Runke, grandfather to Andrew, Allison & Aaron)*

**Roger Kolker, Sr.** (father of Roger Kolker, Jr.)  
**Patricia Goetz LaFreniere** (sister of Glen Zagorski)  
**Antonio Lannuzzi** (fiancé of Darcy Geddis' daughter, Jessica)  
**Stephanie Lucchese** (mother of Laurie Perry's friend Jacquie Szachara)  
**Scott Millhouse** (cousin of Bob Stock)  
**Rick Nelson** (son of Herb and Sue Nelson)  
**Marie Nettleton** (aunt of Toni Thompson)  
**Mary Nicoll** (aunt of Mark, Annalisse and Cameron Baker and  
Godmother to Cameron & sister of Jeanne Shiao)  
**Melvin Pfohl** (father of Donna Knights)  
**Mario Piane** (beloved neighbor of the Wholley family)  
**Cindy Pohlam** (sister of Karol Rejman, a co-worker of Todd Schaeber)  
**Jack Raymond** (brother of Mary Lammela)  
**Ruth Reiser** (aunt of Gabriele and Frank Nardoizzi)  
**Lauren Rice** (friend of John Perry's niece Martha)  
**Mary Rouzic** (sister of Laura Fawcett)  
**Charles Ray Sawdey** (father of Cheryl Barker)  
**Merlin Scharfe**  
**Kathy Schulmerich** (friend of Howard & Jan Sharp)  
**Edward Sowa** (former brother-in-law of John & Pat Schmeelk)  
**Anna Steuerwald**  
**Ray (Hap) Stock** (uncle of Bob Stock)  
**Bridget Tierno** (co-worker of John Costanza)  
**Cathleen Todd** (sister of Sue Towsley)  
**Edward Tourje** (friend of Howard & Jan Sharp)  
**Deb Trombino** (dear friend of Sandy Goehle)  
**Don Waite** (friend of Mary Osgood)  
**James Walkup** (uncle of Rosemarie Kolker)  
**Bill Ward**  
**Wendy** (mother of Nikki Erdley)  
**Everett (Glenn) Wetzel** (stepfather of Kim Campbell,  
grandfather to Cole, Jared and Mackenzie)  
**Shirley Yerger** (mother of Ruth Gates' childhood friend)  
**Doris Zang** (grandmother of Pastor Abigail Zang Hoffman)

*Lorraine Carlson Zagorski (step-mother of Glen Zagorski)*

*We remember the sisters and brothers from our twinned parish in  
Shurugwi, Zimbabwe who have died in the last year.*

*Khulu Mashayamombe*

*Gogo Mbanje*

*We remember the residents of the Advent House who have died in the past year.*

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# Calendar for week of November 1 – November 8

(Updated on 10/28/20 at 12 noon, visit <https://blcfairport.org/event-directory/> for updates)

## Sunday, November 1

### **All Saints' Sunday**

### **Daylight Savings Time**

### **Ends! Turn clocks back one hour**

8:30 am Facebook

Livestream

Worship followed by Holy

Communion – the sanctuary

will be open for people to receive communion until 11 am.

7:30 pm Zoom\* LYO

([Join](#) or use ID 818 2417 6546)

## Monday, November 2

6:00 pm Virtual Youth Choir

([Join](#) or use ID 816 9461 2911)

7:00 pm Zoom\* GFL

Confirmation

([Join](#) or use ID 859 4816 8778)

## Tuesday, November 3

4:30 pm Zoom\* Education

Planning Meeting

6:00 pm BSA Troop 2019

Meeting

## Wednesday, November 4

9:30 am Zoom\* Bible Study

([Join](#) or use ID 943 3691 2942)

1:00 pm Zoom\* Men's Lunch

([Join](#) or use ID 455 211 942)

6:30 pm Chancel Bells

7:30 pm Zoom\* Chancel Choir

Rehearsal

([Join](#) or use ID 869 2314 9200)

## Thursday, November 5

10:00 am Zoom\* CMT

([Join](#) or use ID 825 5536 5823)

6:30 pm Zoom\* BLC Officers

Meeting

## Friday, November 6

### **Pastor's Sabbath**

10:00 am Folk Group Rehearsal

3:00 pm Dulcimer Group

Rehearsal

## Saturday, November 7

## Sunday, November 8

8:30 am Facebook

Livestream

Worship

9:45 am Zoom\* Coffee with a

Pastor

([Join](#) or use ID 823 7018 2058)

10:00 am Zoom\* Pre-K to 2<sup>nd</sup>

Grade Monthly Meet-Up

([Join](#) or use ID 853 8991 1172)

10:30 am Zoom\* Finance

Committee Meeting

7:30 pm Zoom\* LYO

([Join](#) or use ID 818 2417 6546)

**For additional details** about any of the meetings, events and activities listed above contact the church office!

**Church Office Hours:** We continue to hold remote office hours M-F from 9 am to 12 noon. During these times, please call (585) 223-0634 to reach us directly, otherwise you may continue to email us at [office@blcfairport.org](mailto:office@blcfairport.org) and we'll respond as we're able. For further assistance or urgent pastoral care needs outside of office hours, please call the office and leave a message on the pastoral care line. Pastor Amy remains available by phone and email at other times.

**\*To join any of our BLC Zoom meetings, use the ID provided or contact the church office and/or group organizer.**

**\*Zoom Options:** For recurring meetings, the info will remain the same each time. Participants can join with the link provided (above where applicable, or via email), or by using the Meeting ID and manually enter the password (the 10-digit BLC phone number with area code, no spaces or hyphens). **Please contact the group leader or the church office for assistance or additional details! If you have trouble accessing a Zoom meeting in real-time, you can call or text (585) 364-2129 for assistance.**

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## Reflection

All Saints Day is a time to honor not only the lives of those we name who have passed on within the last year, but to reflect on all the “saints” in our lives who contributed to shaping our faith in the promise of Jesus that “where I am you shall be also”. Commemorating this special celebration helps to reinforce the conviction that there is a spiritual connection between those in heaven and those on earth – that wonderful “cloud of witnesses” that surrounds us and urges us to run the race before us.

All Saints Sunday is more than just a sweet remembrance of loved ones passed on. It annually reminds us of our connectedness as Christians. As followers of Jesus we are all “saints” – witnesses to the Good News that promises eternal life with Christ.

Here at Bethlehem Lutheran Church we have always had a very moving and powerful way of acknowledging All Saints Sunday by the lighting of candles for loved ones who have gone before us. The candle symbolizes light in the darkness and signifies the light in the next world. Sadly, this year we will be unable to gather together to celebrate this most beautiful festival, but we can join in spirit by participating in the virtual worship service and each lighting a candle in our own home to memorialize those who left us this year and honor all those we still hold dear – parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, cousins and dear friends.

One of the much-loved hymns used to commemorate All Saints Sunday is “Sine Nomine” – “Without Name”. I never tire of hearing the moving words of this beautiful song of praise. I hope it is one of your favorites, too. Shalom.

*For all the saints, who from their labors rest,  
Who thee, by faith, before the world confessed,  
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blessed!  
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

*Thou wast their rock, their fortress and their might.  
Thou, Lord, their captain in the well-fought fight.  
Thou in the darkness drear, their one true light.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

~ Toni Thompson

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