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**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.

2-WEEK STAR FOR DECEMBER 27, 2020 & JANUARY 3, 2021

First Sunday of Christmas & Epiphany Sunday



**BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

WEEKLY
star

Throughout Advent, we have gathered around the theme “Watch for the Light.” Each week, on Sunday morning, I facilitated a conversation – Advent Coffee Conversations with the Pastor – where I “interviewed” a member of the BLC community. We spoke with a teacher and those who work in healthcare – physical, occupational and mental health – reflecting together on the challenges of living through this pandemic, personally and professionally. Each conversation included the question that was also shared at the end of worship each week: Where have you seen the Light in your life recently?

The answers were as varied as the people who shared; the Light of Christ was glimpsed in nature, holiday lights, friendships, and more. But what struck me is how the Light of Christ is also consistently found in the sharing itself: the Light is found in the telling of one’s story with vulnerability and raw honesty and in receiving that story with openness – of ears and heart and spirit.

The opening verses of the Gospel of John tell us: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. ... The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ... And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:5, 14) The juxtaposition of Word and light strikes me anew this year. When so much else has been taken from us – when the pandemic keeps us from being present in flesh and blood with one another – we still have our words, our voice. The Light of Christ is glimpsed when we use our voice, our words, to bear witness to what we see and hear and experience, and it is glimpsed when we receive the testimony of another.

This week, we celebrate that the Light of Christ has entered this world – that the Word became flesh, and continues to take on flesh in the bodies and with the voices of ordinary people like you and me. It is indeed the Light no darkness can overcome. Thanks be to God!

Merry Christmas!
~ Pastor Hoffman

**WORSHIP TIME: SUNDAYS ~ 8:30 AM WORSHIP
(FACEBOOK LIVE)**

Are you Ready for Worship? There are now three ways to participate in our Livestream of Sunday worship.

1. [Facebook Live](#) - We encourage you to start your own watch party!
2. [Watch On YouTube](#) – Subscribe to our channel
3. [Livestream on the website](#)



Worship the Living God

Lessons for Sunday: 12/27: Isaiah 52:7-10, Psalm 98; Hebrews 1:1-12; John 1:14

The celebration of Christ's birth continues.

Lessons for Sunday: 1/3: Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96, Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-20

We celebrate the birth of Christ, the light of the world!

★ **Two Week STAR:** Please note, this publication is intentionally a 2-week STAR to allow for planned time away for BLC Staff. The content you see on 12/27 and 1/3 will be inclusive of details through January 10 and will be the same information both weeks.

★ Don't forget to look for this **Star Icon (★)** to easily identify the newest information each week

★ **Upstate New York Synod Worship on 12/27!** Join the congregations of the Upstate New York Synod in this service of Lessons and Carols for the Christmas season. Congregations and individuals from across the synod shared their musical gifts, gifts of spoken voice and creativity through art. In addition, congregations submitted photos that serve to remind us of the Christmas season and the work of neighbor justice. BLC Facebook Premier scheduled for 8:30 am. Visit <https://upstatenysynod.org> for more information. The video link to the service, bulletin and details are posted [HERE](#).

Thank you! We give special thanks for music staff and all the talented musicians who offer their gifts to the congregation week after week: Susan DePasquale, Organist; Jim Jefferis, Director, Chancel Choir; Annette Finkbeiner, Director, youth choirs and Chancel Bells; and Rich Towsley, Director, BLC Folk Group & Dulcimers. We are especially grateful for their creative offerings in the seasons of Advent and Christmas at BLC. Music is a fair and glorious gift of God and our worship and community life is enriched by all those who share their musical gifts all year long! We also give special thanks to Andy Gates for sharing his technical gifts and for the integral role he plays in producing the Livestream services to share with the community.

YouTube Viewing of BLC Services: Donna and I have been tuning in to the BLC Sunday morning services since we started the virtual viewing in March. We started out with the Facebook LIVE option. I have to say, it was a bit frustrating each Sunday morning as we were searching for the LIVE broadcast. This was mostly due to our lack of familiarity with the Facebook environment outside of the daily news feed, etc. I will also admit, we were a bit impatient with the service scheduled to begin at 8:30 and at that exact time we did not see any action. We are so grateful with all that our Pastoral leadership and others do to bring us the best community that can be had at this awful time.

About 6 weeks ago, we learned that the services were going to be broadcast on a YouTube channel that the church has secured. I want to say that this process is so much easier than the Facebook option for us and because it is being broadcast on our big screen TV instead of Donna's iPad, the experience is more enjoyable for us. So, here is the BERNER YouTube lesson by dummies. (notice not for dummies, but by dummies!)

First, it will be best to have a YouTube account. I believe YouTube is owned by Google, so if you have a gmail account, it will be the same sign in and password.

Sign in to your YouTube account. This can be done on your computer or on whatever device you use to view YouTube. Then, you want to search for [BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH FAIRPORT](#), channel. It is best then to SUBSCRIBE, for two reasons; one, it will be easier to find the next time you are looking to view service and two, the more subscribes that BLC has on their channel, the more benefits and features that open up to us. I am told by Andy Gates that the break point is 100 subscriptions for more features. (we are almost to 60)

Ok, now to the TV. I believe you will need a smart TV that has the options of streaming services such as HULU, AMAZON, HBO and others, but it should have YouTube there as well. (if not, you will need to explore the instructions with your specific TV and brand to acquire it.

So, on Sunday morning, tune into YouTube, on the left side there is a navigation bar that lists, SEARCH and others, but SUBSCRIPTIONS is also listed and if you have subscribed, [BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH FAIRPORT](#) is listed there. Click on it and look for the video that will be labeled with the date for the day.

LAST INSTRUCTION, PLEASE BE PATIENT AND FLEXIBLE. Click on the LIVE video and wait for the service to start. All of our support for bringing the services to you on any media are volunteers who are doing their best to be on time, without any glitches. But, we know that this is not always the case with any electronic equipment. Be prepared to seek another media if this does not work. We have only had to do that one Sunday in all the weeks it has been available to us. We find that viewing on YouTube is flexible and easier than on Facebook LIVE. Feel free to text me on a Sunday morning if you are struggling and waiting and I will share if we are doing the same. 585-314-9432. ~ Jim Berner



Grow in Faith and Discipleship

Share in BLC's Crucial Conversation on Sunday mornings beginning January 10 at 9:45 am on Zoom

- **Who:** Co-Lead by Pastor Amy and Pastor Hoffman
- **When:** Sunday mornings, January 10, 17, 24 and 31 at 9:45 am
- **Where:** Zoom event
- **What:** We'll study the ELCA's Social Statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*

Adopted in 1993 by the Churchwide Assembly, this social statement is available to read and download at <https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Race-Ethnicity-and-Culture>. Paper copies are available by contacting the church office. Living our faith in daily life means that we spend time wrestling with big issues in an environment of fellow disciples who hold a diversity of viewpoints, opinions, perspectives and experiences. In this environment we'll learn and study together grounded in the unity that comes from faith in Christ. *Share in this important, faith-centered conversation. Come for all four sessions or whenever you're available.*

★ **Midweek Bible Study:** Midweek Bible Study: We will not meet Wednesday, **December 30**. Please consider joining us on **January 6** as we study Epiphany. The following week, (**January 13**) we will begin a study of 1st and 2nd Peter. Please join our conversation. Check the calendar for our Zoom codes! Questions - contact [Kathy Moragne](#).



Serve Our Neighbor

M&SC stands for the Mission and Social Concerns Committee. The next M&SC meeting is **January 13, 2021**, at 6 pm via Zoom. If you would like to attend but are not part of the committee, please contact Beth Walker at rbowsend@rochester.rr.com for the zoom link.

It is the nature of the M&SC committee to push the limits of a congregation's awareness and compassion, to press social justice against comfortable communal worship until one cannot exist without the other. This is how the Bible tells us Jesus lived.

The mission focus for December is Building Capacity –We strive for knowledge and action which will ensure equality for all, because all are part of God's creation.

As the reminder of Jesus' birth draws near, I invite you to consider the great comma in our Apostle's Creed:

I believe ... in Jesus Christ his 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.

We sing of angels and shepherds, mangers and kings, stars and gifts. It feels holy, awe inspiring, eternal. Between the manger and the cross, though, was more than a comma. There existed 30 years of Jesus' life, teaching us how to put aside our differences and dig deeply into what it means to live in relationship not only to God but to one another and to everything on the earth. That is a pause worth thinking about.

~ Beth Walker

If you are interested in thinking about this idea more: *The Universal Christ* by Richard Rohr 2019, Ashford Colour Press
Within the context of racial justice: *Jesus and the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman, 1949, Beacon Press
Free PDF download 2015.260684.Jesus-And.pdf (archive.org)

★ **BLC Angel Tree:** Thank you to everyone who contributed gifts for our Angel Tree Project this year! We provided gifts for five families in the community and also gift cards for clients at Grace House. Thanks again for your support and sharing our gifts with neighbors in need. You are a "Shining Light" to these families.

The 30-hour famine has been a powerful experience our LYO has participated in for years. This year much like everything else in our world, it is going to look much different. In this time of solitude, we have found unexpected ways to come together. The LYO would like to invite the rest of the congregation to join them in a 30 Hour Famine Experience. It will take place the weekend of January 15th and will include a variety of virtual and outdoor activities, with the option to fast or not. Commitment can be customized to your family's comfort level. Simply pledge what you and your family would like to participate in by signing up here <https://blcfairport.org/30-hour-famine-sign-up/>. Stay tuned for more information! Please contact Bethany Trippi with any questions.

We Ask Your Prayers: *We pray for those whose thanks or needs are known to us.*

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

- Marjorie Miller who died on 12/20
- Ken Strecker (stepfather of John Perry) who died on 12/9. Prayers are especially with Mary Strecker (John's mother).

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Jerry Stock (brother of Bob Stock) who is recovering from 12/16 gall bladder surgery
- 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 or recovering from Coronavirus, and their caregivers

We also fulfill our commitment to pray for one another by remembering these members & friends of Bethlehem and their families Jim & Alli O'Malley (Paul & Paige), Karen Palermo (Jonathan), Martha Parker, Chad Parker, Jordan Parker, Rachael & Jacob Parlett (Clara & Levi), John & Laurie Perry, David Perry, Seth Perry and our brothers and sisters in our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. Additional ongoing prayer concerns can be found in the monthly prayer listing.

[Click here to view and print the December long-term prayer listing](#) – or contact the church office for a copy!

Calendar for week of December 27 – January 3

(Updated on 12/23/20 at 12 noon, visit <https://blcfairport.org/event-directory/> for updates)

Sunday, December 27
First Sunday of Christmas
8:30 am Service of Lessons
and Carols with the Upstate
New York Synod
No LYO

Monday, December 28
BLC Office Closed
No Virtual Youth Choir
No Confirmation

Tuesday, December 29
BLC Office Closed
Wednesday, December 30
BLC Office Closed
No Bible Study
No Chancel Bells
No Chancel Choir

Thursday, December 31
BLC Office Closed

Friday, January 1
BLC Office Closed
No Folk Group Rehearsal
No Dulcimer Group
Rehearsal

Saturday, January 2

Sunday, January 3
Epiphany Sunday
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)

The church office will be closed on Friday December 25 & Monday, December 28 in observance of the Christmas Holiday. In order to provide additional vacation time for BLC staff this holiday week, the church office will remain closed through January 3. In the event of a Pastoral Emergency (i.e. death, family or individual crisis) please contact Pastor Korey Finstad at 585-402-8451.

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

***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.**

Calendar for week of January 3 – January 10

(Last updated on 12/22/20 at 12 noon, visit <https://blcfairport.org/event-directory/> for updates)

Sunday, January 3

Epiphany Sunday

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, January 4

6:00 pm Virtual Youth Choir
([Join](#) or use ID 816 9461 2911)
6:30 pm BSA Troop 208
7:00 pm Zoom* GFL
Confirmation
([Join](#) or use ID 859 4816 8778)

Tuesday, January 5

BLC Office Closed**

6:30 pm BSA Troop 2019
7:00 pm Lenten Devotional
Planning Meeting

Wednesday, January 6

9:30 am Zoom* Bible Study
([Join](#) or use ID 943 3691 2942)
1:00 pm Zoom* Men's Lunch
([Join](#) or use ID 874 8853 3240)
3:00 pm Education Planning
Meeting
6:30 pm Chancel Bells
7:30 pm Zoom* Chancel Choir
Rehearsal
([Join](#) or use ID 869 2314 9200)

Thursday, January 7

10:00 am Zoom* CMT
([Join](#) or use ID 825 5536 5823)
6:30 pm Zoom* BLC Officers

Friday, January 8

No Folk Group Today
3:00 pm Dulcimer Group
Rehearsal

Saturday, January 9

9:15 am Property Committee

Sunday, January 10

Baptism of Our Lord

8:30 am Facebook
Livestream
Worship
9:45 am Zoom* Coffee & Crucial
Conversation hosted by the
Pastors
([Join](#) or use ID 823 7018 2058)
7:30 pm Zoom* LYO
([Join](#) or use ID 818 2417 6546)

****Beth Schoenfeld will be out of the office** on Tuesdays from January 5 – March 10. Pastor Amy remains available on Tuesdays and can be reached by phone when she is not in the office.

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 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.

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Announcements for the STAR should be submitted through the office by Wednesday morning at 9am. Visit www.blcfairport.org and to sign up for reminders and special announcements (including the STAR!)



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



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