



Sunday, January 31 ~ Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

In Deuteronomy God promises to raise up a prophet like Moses, who will speak for God; in Psalm 111 God shows the people the power of God's works. For the church these are ways of pointing to the unique authority people sensed in Jesus' actions and words. We encounter that authority in God's word, around which we gather, the word that prevails over any lesser spirit that would claim power over us, freeing us to follow Jesus.

Prelude: Toccata in C

C. Seixas

Gathering Words and Welcome

SERVICE OF WORD AND PRAYER

If possible, prepare a worship space in your home with a bowl of water. The presence of water reminds us of God's forgiveness that comes to us through the Sacrament of Baptism. During this time of continued physical distancing, we cling with confident hope to the promise that by God's love and grace, we are made one with Christ in baptism.

Confession and Forgiveness:

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the Creator, the Beloved One, the Comforter.

Amen.

Beloved in the Lord: we confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

We acknowledge that we are sinners and we confess our sins – those known to us that burden our hearts, and those unknown to us but seen by you. We know that before you nothing remains hidden, and in you everything is revealed. Free us from the slavery of sin; liberate us from the bondage of guilt; work in us that which is pleasing in your sight; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

How vast is God's grace! Through the power and promise of † Christ Jesus, our sins are washed away and we are claimed as God's own beloved. Indeed, we are forgiven. In the wake of God's forgiveness, we are called to be the beloved community living out Christ's justice and the Spirit's reconciling peace.

Amen.

In the waters of baptism we become siblings of Christ and 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.

Gathering Hymn : *O God of Light* #507



1 O God of light, your word, a lamp un - fail - ing,
2 From days of old, through blind and will - ful a - ges,
3 Un - dimmed by time, those words are still re - veal - ing
4 To all the world your sum - mons you are send - ing,



shall pierce the dark - ness of our earth - bound way
though we re - belled, you gent - ly sought a - gain,
to sin - ful hearts your jus - tice and your grace;
through all the earth, to ev - 'ry land and race,



and show your grace, your plan for us un - veil - ing,
and spoke through saints, a - pos - tles, proph - ets, sa - ges,
and quest - ing spir - its, long - ing for your heal - ing,
that myr - iad tongues, in one great an - them blend - ing,



and guide our foot - steps to the per - fect day.
who wrote with ea - ger or re - luc - tant pen.
see your com - pas - sion in the Sav - ior's face.
may praise and cel - e - brate your gift of grace.

Text: Sarah E. Taylor, 1883–1954, alt.

Music: ATKINSON, H. Barrie Cabena, b. 1933

Text © 1952, ren. 1980 The Hymn Society, admin. Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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. Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Children's Moment

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Today's reading is part of a longer discourse in Deuteronomy, an updating of the law for the Israelite community as the people wait to enter the promised land. Here Moses assures the people that God will continue to guide them through prophets who will proclaim the divine word.

[Moses said:] ¹⁵The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. ¹⁶This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." ¹⁷Then the Lord replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. ¹⁹Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. ²⁰But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 111

¹Praise the LORD!

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,
in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

²Great are the works of the LORD,
studied by all who delight in them.

³Full of honor and majesty is his work,
and his righteousness endures forever.

⁴He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds;
the LORD is gracious and merciful.

⁵He provides food for those who fear him;
he is ever mindful of his covenant.

⁶He has shown his people the power of his works,
in giving them the heritage of the nations.

⁷The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy.

⁸They are established forever and ever,
to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.

⁹He sent redemption to his people;
he has commanded his covenant forever.

Holy and awesome is his name.

¹⁰The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good understanding.
His praise endures forever.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: Love Has Come #292, vs 3

Love has come and nev-er will leave us! Love is life ev - er - last-ing and free. Love is

Je - sus with - in and a - mong us. Love is the peace our hearts are seek - ing. Love!

Love! Love is the gift of Christ-mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high! _____

The Holy Gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

Forces that would bring death and disease have taken hold of a man, yet they recognize Jesus and know what his power means for them. Jesus commands these forces to leave and people are amazed at his authority.

²¹[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be

silent, and come out of him!”²⁶ And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.”²⁸ At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Hymn of the Day:

Signs and Wonders

#672



1 Signs and won - ders lead the danc - ing from the heart God frees from fear:
2 Hope and free - dom join the cir - cle: Mar - y to the gar - den came,
3 Cast a - side all fear and hid - ing; hand in hand we dance the round.



wings of an - gels greet the mai - den, and God finds a dwell - ing here;
saw the ra - diance of the mar - vel, heard the Ris - en call her name;
God is with us, Christ, a - bid - ing, and the Spir - it's gifts a - bound.



bold - ly may we lift our hands, bow the head, and voice A - men;
bold - ly may we heed Christ's call, step be - yond the gar - den wall:
Called by God to ho - li - ness, let us bold - ly serve and bless;



thus does glo - ry shine at mid - night: o - pen hearts in - vite the star - light.
beau - ti - ful the feet pro - ceed - ing with good news of death's de - feat - ing.
and to hearts that sigh and hun - ger may our lives dance signs and won - ders.

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, b. 1953

Music: FREU DICH SEHR, *Trente quatre psaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

Text © 2005 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

The Apostles' Creed:

Together 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.**

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: Balm in Gilead

arr. Patricia Sanders

Cota

Chancel Bells (Director, Annette Finkbeiner)

Offertory: *We Plow the Fields and Scatter* #680 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



Offertory Prayer:

Let us pray. O God,

receive these gifts as you receive us: like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide. Nourish us anew in your tender care, and empower us in faithful service to tend to others with this same love, through Jesus Christ, our saving grace. 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.

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

Brief silence

With your love, transform us. Fill elected leaders with the spirit of servants. Give rest to those who are tired from carrying heavy loads. Strengthen and sustain those who are worn down from labor or isolation. God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

Transform the chaos of this world into your justice-filled order. Clear the way for vaccines to be available to all in need across the globe. Guide us to live in your abundance and share our resources for the sake of our neighbors, especially those who are hungry or lack sufficient food. God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

You know our needs even before we ask. Today we pray for these members and friends of Bethlehem and their families: Jim & Caroline (Andrew Saylor), Katrina, Todd & Sara (Abigail & Emerson), Jim & Ricki, Jim & Mary, John & Pat. We also pray for our sisters and brothers in our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of compassion, visit those in need of strength or healing today.

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

- Anne, aunt of Marja who died on 1/24
- Nancy who died on 1/23
- Ron, brother of former BLC Member Bob who died on 1/19

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Joe, husband of Donna's friend who will be undergoing testing for health issues
- Cathy, niece of Ruth who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer
- Bernice, mother of Kathy who is recovering after a recent hospitalization
- Shekeria and Dimitri, siblings who were abducted from their foster home on 1/18. We give thanks for their safe return and continue our prayers of healing for the whole family.
- David, brother of Ron, who is recovering from carotid artery surgery on 1/18
- 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
 - Waverly, friend of Phyllis
 - Bethany
 - Ethan, grandson of Kay

Hear these prayers that we raise to you silently in our hearts or with our voice.

Extended Silence

God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

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

WE LEAVE TO SERVE:

Benediction:

God the creator strengthen you; Jesus the beloved fill you; and the Holy Spirit the comforter † keep you in peace.

Amen.

Sending Hymn:	<i>We Are Marching in the Light</i>	#866
<i>(Music on the following page)</i>		

Go in peace beloved ones. Be the light of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

Narthex Chat

Postlude: Postlude in E Major

J. Kuhnau

* * * * *

Thank you to Mike Koncilja... *for leading our worship music while Susan DePasquale is away!*

Thank you to Pastor Korey Finstad... *for proclaiming God's Word among us! Pastor Finstad formerly served as an Associate Pastor at BLC and is now serving the congregations of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Penfield and St. Martin Lutheran Church in Webster. We are grateful for his witness among us.*



Si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen - khos', si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha -
 We are march - ing in the light of God, we are march - ing in the



nyen' kwen - khos'. *Si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen - khos',*
 light of God. We are march - ing in the light of God,



si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen - khos'.
 we are march - ing in the light of God.



Si - ya - ham - ba (ham - ba, si - ya - ham - ba) OO
 We are march - ing (march - ing, we are march - ing) OO



si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen - khos'.
 we are march - ing in the light of God.



Si - ya - ham - ba (ham - ba, si - ya - ham - ba) OO
 We are march - ing (march - ing, we are march - ing) OO



si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen - khos'.
 we are march - ing in the light of God.

Additional stanzas ad lib.:

We are dancing ...

We are praying ...

We are singing ...

Calendar for week of January 31 – February 7

(Last updated on 1/27/21 at 12 noon, visit <https://blcfairport.org/event-directory/> for updates)

Sunday, January 31

Pastor Amy Time Away*

8:30 am Facebook Livestream Worship
9:45 am Zoom* Coffee & Crucial Conversation hosted by the Pastors
([Join](#) or use ID 823 7018 2058)
6:30 pm Zoom* Story time for pre-K through 5th grade and families
([Join](#) or use ID 815 7566 9638)
7:30 pm Zoom* LYO
([Join](#) or use ID 818 2417 6546)

Monday, February 1

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, February 2

BLC Office Closed**

6:30 pm BSA Troop 2019

Wednesday, February 3

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, February 4

10:00 am Zoom* CMT
([Join](#) or use ID 825 5536 5823)

Friday, February 5

10:00 am Folk Group Rehearsal
3:00 pm Dulcimer Group Rehearsal

Saturday, February 6

Sunday, February 7

Scout 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)

***Pr. Amy will have time away** beginning Friday, January 29 and continuing through Sunday, February 7. Pastor Amy has arranged for coverage for pastoral emergencies (i.e. death, family or individual crisis). Please contact the church office and leave a message on the Pastoral Care line. Your request will be forwarded to the pastoral leader on call.

****Beth Schoenfeld will be out of the office** on Tuesdays through 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.

***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.**

Rules or Relationship?

Do you want to be right, or do you want to have a relationship? When a teenager spends \$200 on the world's coolest sunglasses is it the time to comment on the foolishness of the purchase or to simply smile and nod? In 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, Paul addressed the question: may the people of Corinth eat meat sacrificed to idols? Paul seems to suggest that it does not really matter where the meat comes from. What matters is how the people you care about feel about that meat. Will it challenge their faith? Will it become a stumbling block to the weak? Do you want to be right, or do you want to have a relationship?

This theme continues in the gospel. The laws prohibiting work on the sabbath carry deep meaning for many people of faith, and yet on this sabbath Jesus rebukes an unclean spirit and frees a man. Jesus chooses to care for the man and to free him, rather than worry over the details of the law. In this instance Jesus is not condemned for his choice, as he will be later. But his fame begins to spread throughout the region. That too will later prove dangerous, yet it is also a sign of the evangelical nature of the faith. This is not a private faith, held closely and kept hidden. Rather it is an outgoing faith spread from person to person throughout the world.

To this day people continue to place barriers and restrictions on the faith. Congregations do this in intentional ways, for example, by setting a minimum age for receiving holy communion. The benefits of these restrictions can be debated, but at least they are chosen intentionally. Churches also create unintentional barriers. Consider the clothes people wear to church each Sunday. Are many people wearing suits and ties? Do you see blue jeans? Do people wear shorts in the summer? What are some of the ways people might be kept from a relationship with Jesus by the barriers we create?

Confession from Sundays and Seasons Augsburg Fortress resources are being livestreamed by permission. All rights reserved.

From *Sundays and Seasons.com*. Copyright 2020 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 OneLicense under Annual License #A-724002

Reprinted by permission under CCLI Annual License #11159563

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education

Of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

Used by permission. All rights reserved.