

Abide in my love
JOHN 15:9



Sunday, May 9, 2021 ~ Sixth Sunday of Easter

This Sunday's image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. We are called to serve others as Jesus came to serve; but for John's gospel, the image of servanthood is too hierarchical, too distant, to capture the essence of life with Christ. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us. The Greeks believed that true friends are willing to die for each other. This is the mutual love of Christian community commanded by Christ and enabled by the Spirit.

Welcome!

We are so glad to have you share in worship at Bethlehem today. If you are visiting, please introduce yourself to one of the Pastors – they would love to greet you personally!

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.

Children are welcome and encouraged to participate in worship. We have designated space within the sanctuary (underneath the window of Jesus, the Good Shepherd) that is reserved for families who may need additional space for strollers or carriers for children who cannot yet wear masks. We ask you to attend to distancing. If there is a way we can make worship a more hospitable environment for your family, please speak to a pastor or leave a comment through our website (see above).

Hearing assistance: Our sound system is equipped with personal hearing loop devices. Please ask an usher for a loop device.

Holy Communion is important to our life of faith. At this time, we receive communion on the first Sunday of the month.

Our Perrin Street entrance is accessible. Please ask for help if you need assistance.

Please silence your cell phones: As a courtesy to others, we ask that you please silence your cell phones during worship.

Make reservations to attend worship and learn more about how to view livestreamed worship at <https://blcfairport.org/share-in-worship/>.

Gathering Words/Welcome and Announcements

SERVICE OF WORD AND PRAYER

Thanksgiving for Baptism:

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ, let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

We thank you, risen Christ,

for these waters where you make us new, leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.

We bless you, risen Christ,

that your Spirit comes to us in the grace-filled waters of rebirth, like rains to our thirsting earth, like streams that revive our souls, like cups of cool water shared with strangers.

Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear.

Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.

Send us companions on our journey as we share your life.

Make us one, risen Christ.

Cleanse our hearts.

Shower us with life.

To you be given all praise, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God, now and forever.

Amen.

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

We extend signs of Christ's peace to those with whom we worship.

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. O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond understanding. Pour into our hearts such love for you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises, which exceed all we can desire; through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Reading: 1 John 5:1-6

God's children believe that Jesus is the Messiah and love God by keeping God's commandments. Thus the world is conquered not through military might but through love and faith.

¹Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. ²By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. ³For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, ⁴for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. ⁵Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

⁶This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth. The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: John 15:9-17

On the night of his arrest, Jesus delivers a final testimony to his disciples to help them in the days ahead. Here, he repeats the most important of all his commands, that they love one another.

[Jesus said:] ⁹“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

¹²“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. ¹⁷I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Silent reflection

Apostle's Creed:

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.**

Prayer of Dedication

Offering

Our worship is complete when we bring all of our resources to receive God's blessing and fulfill God's purpose. We celebrate the opportunity to share our abundance – of compassion, of time, and of material resources. 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. Those worshipping in person may leave their offerings in the basket in the narthex.



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

Offering of Music:

Prelude on "Rhosymedre" (ELW #640)

Alice Jordan

Organist

Offertory Prayer:

Let us pray. God of love,
you call us beloved children and welcome us always. Receive our lives and the gifts we offer. Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world; for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ. 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.

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

Brief silence

We lift up prayers of thanksgiving for:

- Cooper James Miller (son of Chris and Kathryn Miller) who will be baptized 5/9

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

- Robert (friend of Bob & Julie's son, David)
- Lynsay (friend of Jackie) who died on 4/24
- Karen (friend of Carol) who died on 4/9

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Marilyn as she anticipates surgery on 5/12
- Bob & Judy as Bob moves to St. John's Green Houses on 5/6
- Tim (husband of Linda) who is recovering from recent surgery
- Dan who is recovering after a recent hospitalization
- Madison (granddaughter of Linda) who is recovering from recent surgery
- Waverly, friend of Phyllis Stock as she seeks a kidney donor
- 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

Hear also the prayers we raise to you in our hearts or in our voice.

Long silence.

Hear us, O God:

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer:

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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**

Benediction:

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus. The God of life, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen

Dismissal:

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude: Postlude on “At the Lamb’s High Feast We Sing”

David Schack

You will be excused during the postlude from the back of the congregation to the front. You are encouraged to share conversation outside the building!

Calendar for week of May 9 – May 16

(Last updated on 5/5/21 at 12 noon, visit <https://blcfairport.org/event-directory/> for updates)

Sunday, May 9

Baptism at 8:30 am
Blessing of Quilts at 10 am
8:30 am Facebook
Livestream Worship
10:00 am In-person Worship
([Reservation required](#))
7:30 pm LYO

Monday, May 10

2:00 pm Caregiver Support
Group, BLC Courtyard (*NEW!*
*Contact the church office for
more info!*)
6:00 pm Virtual Youth Choir
([Join](#) or use ID 816 9461 2911*)
6:30 pm BSA Troop 208

Tuesday, May 11

6:30 pm Re-Opening Team
([Join](#) or use ID 824 6235 3239 *)

Wednesday, May 12

9:30 am Bible Study
([Join](#) or use ID 943 3691 2942*)
9:30 am Education Planning
Meeting
([Join](#) or use ID 871 8823 9638*)
6:00 pm M&SC Meeting
([Join](#) or use ID 812 1431 6292*)
6:30 pm Chancel Bells
7:30 pm Zoom* Chancel Choir
Rehearsal
([Join](#) or use ID 869 2314 9200*)

Thursday, May 13

Friday, May 14

Pastor's Sabbath
10:00 am Folk Group Rehearsal
3:00 pm Dulcimer Group
Rehearsal

Saturday, May 15

Sunday, May 16

Music Sunday
8:30 am Facebook
Livestream Worship
10:00 am In-person Worship
([Reservation required](#))
7:30 pm LYO

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.

Worshiping In-Person: To accommodate our sanctuary capacity limits, we are currently requiring reservations for worship. You may [reserve space here](#) (the link is also available on BLC's [Share in Worship page](#)). If you need assistance making a reservation or don't have internet access, please contact the church office.

***Zoom Meetings at BLC:** The easiest way to join is to use the direct link available in the [Calendar of Events](#) on our website. If you don't see your meeting in the Calendar of Events or have questions, please contact your group leader or the church office for assistance or additional details!

Invited into Friendship

Ask any child who has moved to a new place and they will probably confirm that their biggest worry was if they'd make new friends. Parents worry for their teenager and young adult in each stage of growth, wondering if new friends will be kind and generous, if their daughter or son will find mutually beneficial relationships. Adults are not immune from their own relationship trials. Busy lives, competing priorities, transitions and death can mean the end of sustaining relationships. Bullying, fear-tactics and misuse of others are common problems, so friendship is precious. We treasure new friendships and work to keep tending those that last for many years—because we need them.

Today's readings inspire and compel us to love one another and see one another as God does. As the Holy Spirit falls on those outside the inner circle of the circumcised, Peter asks how the water of baptism can be withheld. In 1 John we hear that those who love the parent love the child. Jesus says followers are no longer servants but friends. So whether they are a stranger with different customs and practices, our family member, or closest friend, we are called today with the challenge and opportunity to love them. The promise is that this unconditional love that comes first from our Creator and Parent, expressed through the person of Jesus and through the Spirit, is splashed all over us, and will make our joy complete.

For those who have experienced great relationships in their lives and for those who have never yet quite tasted that sustaining fruit, Jesus shows how much he loves us and the ways to cultivate deeper relationships. Jesus laid down his life to show his great love. We're invited to love expansively and experience the joy of friendship with Jesus and through the body of Christ.

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.

