

Sunday, May 23, 2021 ~ Day of Pentecost



Fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Crossing all boundaries that would separate us, the Spirit brings the wideness of God's mercy to places we least expect it—to a crowd of strangers of different lands and tongues, to dry bones, to our weak hearts. Jesus promises his disciples that they will be accompanied by the Holy Spirit, and that this Spirit reveals the truth. We celebrate that we too have been visited with this same Spirit. Guided by the

truth, we join together in worship, and then disperse to share the fullness of Christ's love with the world.

Prelude: Chorale Prelude on "Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord" Georg Friedrich Kauffmann

Gathering Words/Welcome and Announcements

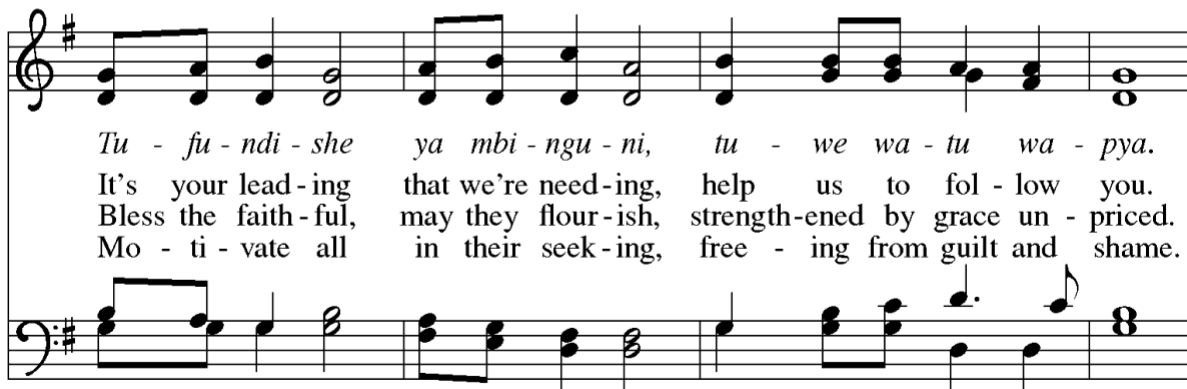
SERVICE OF WORD AND PRAYER

Create a focal point for worship in your home in the Easter season. Add an Alleluia, maybe your Easter bells, or fresh flowers. In addition to these items, a candle and bowl of water remind us of the new life we have received through our baptism into Christ's death and resurrection and our call to let our Christ light shine! Christ is with us wherever we gather, and by God's love and grace, we are one in Christ, across time and space. Throughout our worship, ring your bells each time you hear, speak, or sing the word "Alleluia!"

Gathering Hymn:	Gracious Spirit, Heed Our Pleading	#401
	(Music on the following page)	



Njo - o kwe - tu, Ro - ho mwe - ma, M - fa - ri - ji we - tu.
 1 Gra - cious Spir - it, heed our plead - ing, fash - ion us all a - new.
 2 Come to teach us, come to nour - ish those who be - lieve in Christ.
 3 Guide our think - ing and our speak - ing done in your ho - ly name.



Tu - fu - ndi - she ya mbi - ngu - ni, tu - we wa - tu wa - pya.
 It's your lead - ing that we're need - ing, help us to fol - low you.
 Bless the faith - ful, may they flour - ish, strength - ened by grace un - priced.
 Mo - ti - vate all in their seek - ing, free - ing from guilt and shame.

Refrain



Njo - o, njo - o, njo - o, Ro - ho mwe - ma.
 Come, come, come, Ho - ly Spir - it, come.



Njo - o, njo - o, njo - o, Ro - ho mwe - ma.
 Come, come, come, Ho - ly Spir - it, come.

4 Not mere knowledge, but discernment,
 nor rootless liberty;
 turn disquiet to contentment,
 doubt into certainty.

5 Keep us fervent in our witness,
 unswayed by earth's allure.
 Ever grant us zealous fitness,
 which you alone assure.

Text: Wilson Niwagila; tr. Howard S. Olson, b. 1922

Music: NJOO KWETU, ROHO MWEMA, Wilson Niwagila; arr. Egil Hovland, b. 1924

English and Swahili text and tune © Lutheran Theological College, Makumira, Tanzania, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Arr. © Egil Hovland. Used by permission.

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. Mighty God, you breathe life into our bones, and your Spirit brings truth to the world. Send us this Spirit, transform us by your truth, and give us language to proclaim your gospel, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Reading: Romans 8:22-27, 31-39

By pouring the Holy Spirit into our hearts, God gives us the promised first fruit of eternal life so that we await God's future in hope. In the meantime, the Spirit also intercedes for us by carrying the prayers of our weak human hearts to God.

²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; ²³and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

²⁶Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

³¹What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ... ³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation:



The gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

While speaking to his disciples before his death, Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as “the Helper” and describes the difference the Spirit will make in their lives and in the world.

[Jesus said,] ²⁶“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. ²⁷You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning.

^{16:4b}“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ ⁶But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. ⁷Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹about sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; ¹¹about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

¹²“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Message for All Ages

Presentation of those Affirming their Baptisms:

Today we have the privilege of witnessing as these sisters and brothers affirm their faith in Christ as well the promises made at their baptism. I invite each of you to stand where you are when you are named.

Michael Allan Chaffee, Allison Christine Furst, Aderyn Paige Gantner, Rachel Elizabeth Meetze, Jonathan Paul-Reyes Palermo, Lauren Anya Salvador, Evan Frederick Sousa, Olivia Bo-ri Strasser, Elizabeth Marie Wholley

Profession of Faith (*congregational stands*):

Together with your siblings in Christ, you wish to profess your faith in God and reject sin. We make these bold statements not because we are absolutely certain about these things, but because we are always becoming faithful to them and learning to wrestle with these claims about our relationship with God. We join our voices with yours to remind you that we are all in this together.

People of God: Do you reject the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that pull us away from God? If so, say, “We do!”
We do!

Do you promise to continue supporting these children of God, affirming them through all circumstances with their first and forever name: Beloved?

Do you promise to hold healthy and safe space for them to keep growing in faith, so they learn to trust there is nothing they can do to make God love them any more or any less than they are already loved in Jesus? If so, say, “We do!”
We do!

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**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.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

Congregation is seated

Affirmation in the Presence of the Assembly:

Will you join us in practicing your faith and keeping these responsibilities:
To live among God's faithful people, to pray,
to hear the word of God and share the Lord's Supper,
to learn the prayers, creeds, and commandments, to open the holy Scriptures,
to be nurtured by the faith and prayers of others,
so that you learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made and work for justice and peace?

I will ask each of you to respond individually by saying, ***"I will, and I ask God to help me."***

People of God, do you promise to support these sisters and brothers and pray for them in their life in Christ?

We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.

Prayer for the Holy Spirit

Join me in celebrating with these sisters and brothers in Christ.

**We celebrate your faith, your voice, and your unfolding story as beloved children of God!
On behalf of the whole church on earth, we will continue to pray for your faith and give thanks for you. God bless you!**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

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

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.



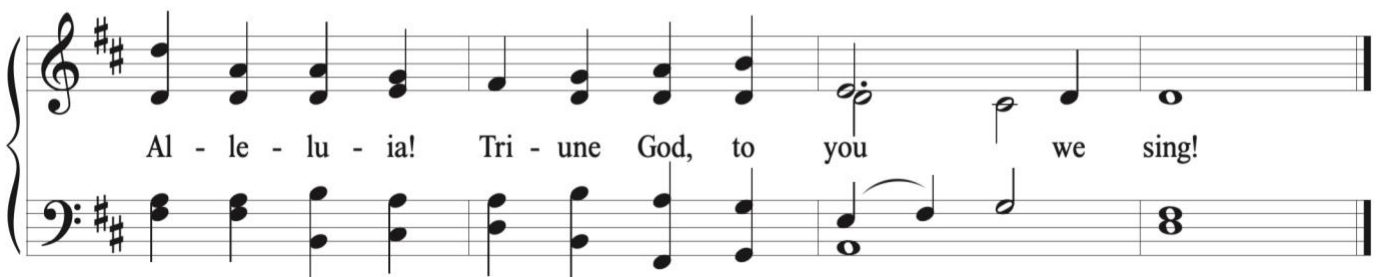
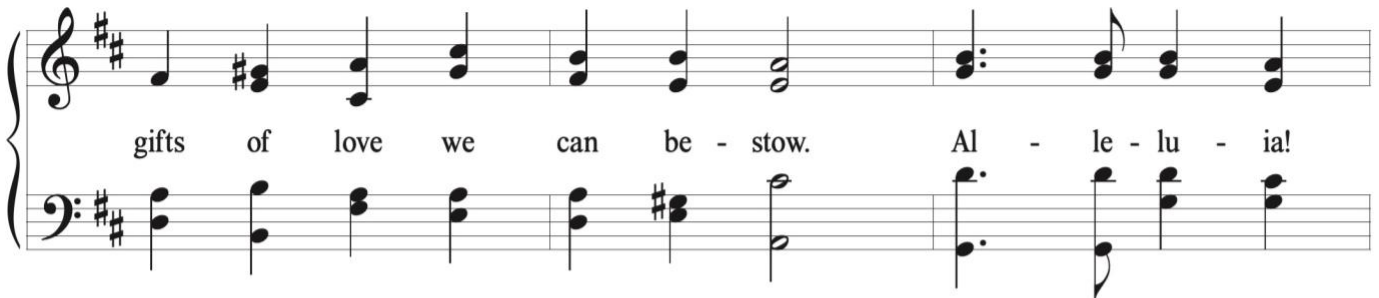
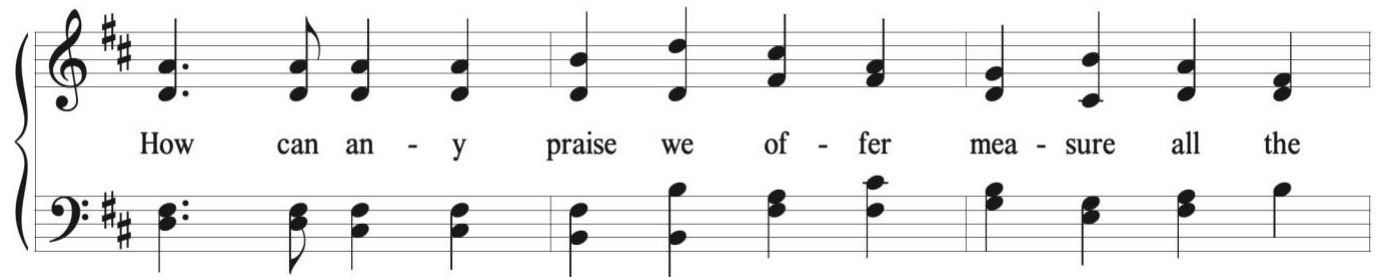
Whatever form your offering takes, we give thanks to God for you and your generosity.

Offering of Music:

Chorale Prelude on "Holy Spirit, Truth Divine"

Organist

Healey Willan



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. You may also lift up the name of someone in need of prayer in the comments of our worship livestream.

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

On this Pentecost Sunday, when your Son ascended into heaven to reign with you in power and glory, you sent the Holy Spirit to guide us into the life of Christ. Let your Spirit continue to guide us, so that we may live in peace and hope, grow in faith, and keep your commandments of love. Hear us, O God

Your mercy is great

Bless our confirmands as you guide and direct their steps. Help them to be strong when they are weak, to feel peace when they are afraid, and to feel your love, always. Fill their hearts with the fire of your love. Hear us, O God

Your mercy is great

We give thanks that you see us and know our needs. Today we pray for these members and friends of Bethlehem and their families: Tonya & William (Makenna & Owen), Heather & Paul, Eve & John, Kari, Elenor, Nicki (Brielle). We also pray for our sisters and brothers in our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. Hear us, O God

Your mercy is great

God of compassion, you know our needs better than we ourselves. Hear the prayers that we offer you now.

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

- Susan Pobjoy (longtime friend of Ruth & Jeff Hedin) who died following a long battle with cancer

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Pastor Amy Walter-Peterson as she prepares for knee replacement surgery on May 26
- Cathy Gottermeier recovering from recent surgery
- Waverly, who continues to face multiple health challenges
- 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 these prayers we raise to you in our hearts or on our voice.

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

Sending Hymn:

Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling

#582

(Music on the following page)

Dismissal:

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

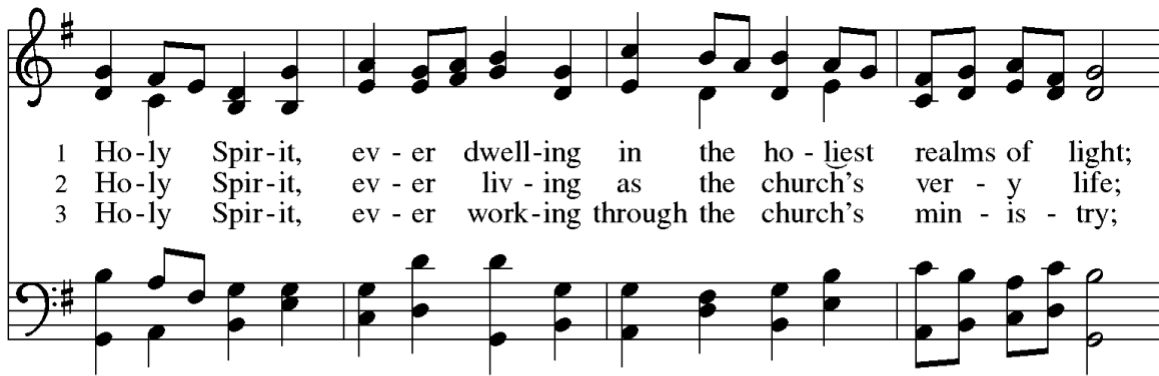
Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news.

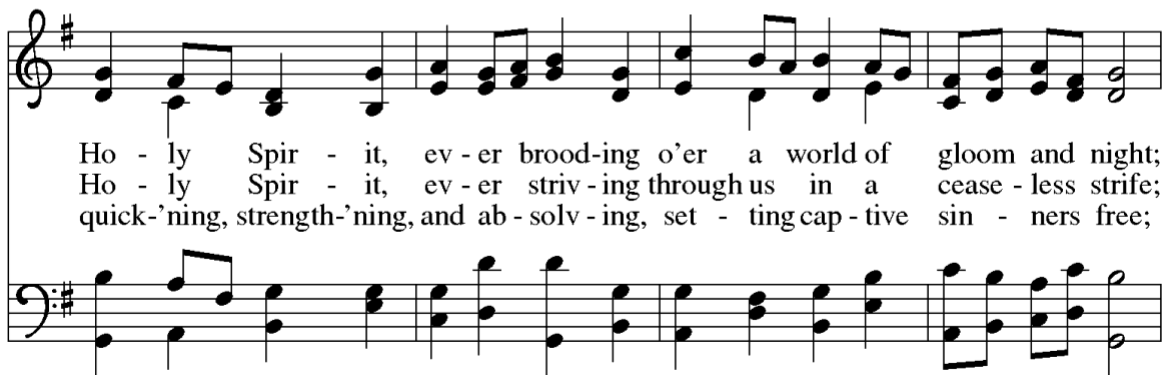
Thanks be to God.

Postlude: Postlude on "Creator Spirit, Heavenly Dove"

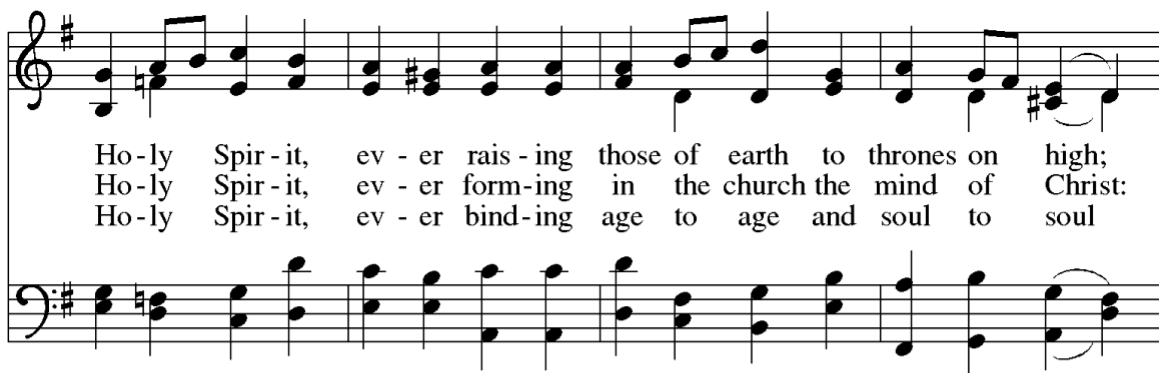
René Quignard



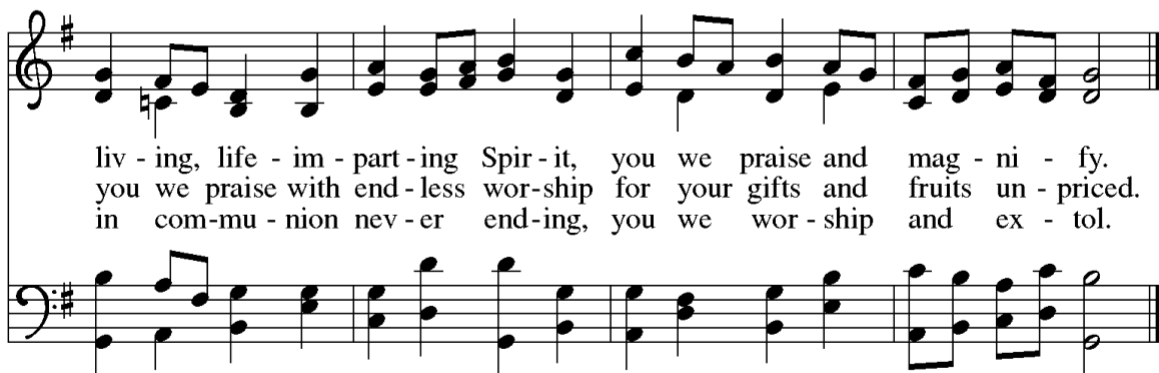
1 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev - er dwell-ing in the ho - liest realms of light;
2 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev - er liv - ing as the church's ver - y life;
3 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev - er work-ing through the church's min - is - try;



Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er brood-ing o'er a world of gloom and night;
Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er striv - ing through us in a cease - less strife;
quick-'ning, strength-'ning, and ab - solv - ing, set - ting cap - tive sin - ners free;



Ho-ly Spir-it, ev - er rais - ing those of earth to thrones on high;
Ho-ly Spir-it, ev - er form-ing in the church the mind of Christ;
Ho-ly Spir-it, ev - er bind-ing age to age and soul to soul



liv - ing, life - im - part - ing Spir - it, you we praise and mag - ni - fy.
you we praise with end - less wor - ship for your gifts and fruits un - priced.
in com - mu - nion nev - er end - ing, you we wor - ship and ex - tol.

Text: Timothy Rees, 1874–1939, alt.

Music: IN BABILONE, *Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlities en Contradansen*, 1710; arr. Julius Röntgen, 1855–1932

**The red flowers that signify Pentecost and decorate the Sanctuary
were given to God's glory by the following:**

Karen Allen in honor of the Allen Family

Bob & Cathy Anderson to the Glory of God

Bill and Gunnar Antell in memory of Georgene Antell

& in honor of all those who serve the church

Sherry & Jim Cook in honor of Pastor Amy, Pastor Hoffman

and all the BLC Staff

Kathy Forney in memory of Ralph and Betty Deuel

Sandy Goehle in honor of loved ones

Bob & Judy Lohr in memory of Allen & Dorothy Lohr

and Edward & Loretta Baldasari

Marguerite Manning

Linda Montalbano in memory of my parents Helen and Ed Palm

Kathy Moragne in honor my parents - George and Bernice Stevens

John & Pat Schmeelk in memory of the parents of Pat & John

Howard & Janet Sharp in honor of Pastor Amy Walter-Peterson

and Pastor Abigail Hoffman

Jerry & Toni Thompson in memory of our parents Gerald

and Vera Thompson & Edward and Harriet Gladys

Beth & Rick Walker in memory of Jean and Harry Terry

Calendar for May 23 – May 30

(Last updated on 5/19/21 at 12 noon, visit <https://blcfairport.org/event-directory/> for updates)

Sunday, May 23

Pentecost Sunday

Confirmation Sunday

8:30 am Facebook

Livestream Worship

10:00 am In-person Worship

([Reservation required](#))

7:30 pm LYO – new confirmands are encouraged to attend!

Monday, May 24

6:30 pm BSA Troop 208

Tuesday, May 25

2:00 pm Support Group for

Caregivers in the BLC Courtyard

6:30 pm Re-Opening Team

([Join](#) or use ID 824 6235 3239)

Wednesday, May 26

Pastor Amy Medical Leave*

9:30 am Bible Study

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

Thursday, May 27

BLC Office Closed **

Friday, May 28

BLC Office Closed **

3:00 pm Dulcimer Group

Rehearsal

Saturday, May 29

Sunday, May 30

Holy Trinity Sunday

Companion Synod Sunday

8:30 am Facebook

Livestream Worship

10:00 am In-person Worship

([Reservation required](#))

No LYO today!

Calendar for May 30 – June 6

Sunday, May 30

Holy Trinity Sunday

Companion Synod Sunday

8:30 am Facebook

Livestream Worship

10:00 am In-person Worship

([Reservation required](#))

No LYO today!

Monday, May 31

Memorial Day Holiday

BLC Office Closed

Tuesday, June 1

Wednesday, June 2

9:30 am Bible Study

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

1:00 pm Zoom* Men's Lunch

([Join](#) or use ID 874 8853 3240)

Thursday, June 3

BLC Office Closed **

7:00 pm Quilts for Lutheran

World Relief

Friday, June 4

Synod Assembly

3:00 pm Dulcimer Group

Rehearsal

Saturday, June 5

Synod Assembly

10:00 am Gardening/Planting

Day at BLC

Sunday, June 6

Communion Sunday

8:30 am Facebook

Livestream Worship

10:00 am In-person Worship

([Reservation required](#))

11:00 – 11:30 am – the sanctuary will be open for Livestream worshipers to receive communion

2:00 pm *BLC on the Go!*

Letterboxing with the Berners at Harris Hill Park

3:00 pm Senior Voice Recital for Paul O'Malley (invitation only)

7:30 pm LYO

***Pr. Amy will be on medical leave** to recuperate from knee replacement surgery from May 26 – June 8. She hopes to work a reduced schedule beginning June 9. Pastor Hoffman will coordinate pastoral care and provide ministry support during Pastor Amy's absence. In the event of a pastoral care emergency (i.e. death, family or individual crisis), please contact the church office and leave a message on the Pastoral Care line.

****Beth Schoenfeld will be out of the office for planned time away** on Thursday, May 27, Friday, May 28 and Thursday, June 3. **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.

Worshipping 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!

The Holy Spirit's Groaning

Few sounds capture a groan like birth pangs. It is the raw sound of life and birth as well as of pain. It is the guttural desire for the end of the waiting for what has been anticipated and desired. For any who have been present through such an event, it is difficult to ever forget. It is in equal parts beautiful, stunning, and holy, as well as raw, painful, and horrific. "Creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves . . . groan inwardly while we wait for adoption," writes Paul to the church in Rome. He describes aptly that painful wail of our souls for the redemption we know so well, the restoration of all things promised in Christ. As Lutherans we know this all too well as the "now but not yet" proposition of our faith. We have been told of the return of the Messiah. We prepare for this coming and see how the whole of creation groans for her own restoration. We join this creation waiting for our own hearts, souls, and bodies to be restored. We know this is coming and as in pains of labor groan for this reality. While we wait, we are given a midwife, a Spirit of God to join us in our waiting for the birth of a new world and a new reality. This gift is given this day, the day of Pentecost. May the Spirit join us in our cry to God, eagerly awaiting the begotten, the Son of God, Jesus.

Language for Affirmation of Baptism is adapted from *Speak It Plain: Words for Worship and Life Together* and used by permission.

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The Rev. Abigail Zang Hoffman and The Rev. Amy Walter-Peterson, co-Pastors