

The birds of the air
make nests in its shade

MARK 4:32



**Sunday, June 13, 2021 ~ 3rd Sunday after
Pentecost**

The mustard seed becomes a great shrub that shelters the birds, recalling ancient images of the tree of life. We'd expect a cedar or a sequoia, but Jesus finds the power of God better imaged in a tiny, no-account seed. It's not the way we expect divine activity to look. Yet the tree of life is here, in the cross around which we gather, the tree into which we are grafted through baptism, the true vine that nourishes us with its fruit in the cup we share. It may not appear all that impressive, but while nobody's

looking it grows with a power beyond our understanding.

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).

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

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

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/>. If you need assistance making a reservation or don't have internet access, please contact the church office.

Prelude:

(8:30 am) Chorale Prelude on “Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness”
Organist

Johannes Brahms

(10:00 am)

Prayer of Saint Gregory
Dick DePasquale, trumpet

Alan Hovhaness

Gathering Words/Welcome and Announcements

SERVICE OF WORD AND PRAYER

At home: create a focal point for worship in your home. A green plant calls to mind the color of the Sundays after Pentecost and serves as a reminder of growth and maturing in our life of faith, a frequent focus of the gospel texts during this season.

In-person: you are encouraged to participate through your spoken voice in today’s liturgy. In lieu of singing hymns and liturgical music, you are encouraged to use the music texts as part of your prayer and reflection throughout the week, or join in singing them from home by viewing a recording of today’s livestream.

Call to Worship:

In the beginning

before time, before people, before the world began, God was.

Here and now

among us, beside us, enlisting the people of earth for the purposes of heaven, God is.

In the future,

when we have turned to dust and all we know has found its fulfilment, God will be.

Not denying the world, but delighting in it, not condemning the world, but redeeming it, through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit,

God was. God is. God will be!

1 Come, thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
 2 Here I raise my Eb - en - e - zer: "Hith-er by thy help I've come";
 3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be;

streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas-ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.
 and I hope, by thy good plea-sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home.
 let that grace now like a fet - ter bind my wan-d'ring heart to thee.

While the hope of end-less glo - ry fills my heart with joy and love,
 Je - sus sought me when a strang - er, wan-d'ring from the fold of God;
 Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.

teach me ev - er to a - dore thee; may I still thy good-ness prove.
 he, to res - cue me from dan-ger, in - ter - posed his pre-cious blood.
 Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

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 are the tree of life, offering shelter to all the world. Graft us into yourself and nurture our growth, that we may bear your truth and love to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Children's Moment

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:6-10 [11-13] 14-17

Paul encourages believers to live by faith and not by sight. We do not consider Jesus from a human perspective but through the eyes of faith, believing he died for all and was raised. All who are in Christ are now in God's new creation.

⁶So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord—⁷for we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. ¹⁰For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

[¹¹Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are well known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences. ¹²We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. ¹³For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you.] ¹⁴For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. ¹⁵And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.

¹⁶From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (8:30 am)

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

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

The gospel according to Mark.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Mark 4:26-34

Jesus frequently uses parables to teach ordinary people as they are able to hear and understand. Images of sowing and growing show the vitality of God's kingdom.

²⁶[Jesus] said, "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground,²⁷ and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. ²⁸The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. ²⁹But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come."

³⁰He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? ³¹It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; ³²yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

³³With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; ³⁴he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.
The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon



1 He comes to us as one un-known, a breath un - seen, un -
 2 He comes when souls in si - lence lie and thoughts of day de -
 3 He comes to us in sound of seas, the o - cean's fume and
 4 He comes in love as once he came by flesh and blood and
 5 He comes in truth when faith is grown; be - lieved, o - beyed, a -



heard; as though with - in a heart of stone, or shriv - eled seed in
 part; half - seen up - on the in - ward eye, a fall - ing star a -
 foam; yet small and still up - on the breeze, a wind that stirs the
 birth; to bear with - in our mor - tal frame a life, a death, a
 dored; the Christ in all the scrip - tures shown, as yet un - seen, but



dark - ness sown, a pulse of be - ing stirred, a pulse of be - ing stirred.
 cross the sky of night with - in the heart, of night with - in the heart.
 tops of trees, a voice to call us home, a voice to call us home.
 sav - ing name, for ev - 'ry child of earth, for ev - 'ry child of earth.
 not un - known, our Sav - ior and our Lord, our Sav - ior and our Lord.

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, b. 1926

Music: REPTON, C. Hubert H. Parry, 1848–1918

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Response to the Word:

Blessed are they whose way is blameless,
Who follow the teaching of the Lord!

United with believers across space and time, 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.**

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God, our provider,
help us. It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn? Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for life in the world. Amen.

Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, ✠ the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.
Amen.

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.

Offertory: (8:30)

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful

#182



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be



fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your



pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923

Text and music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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Offertory Prayer:

Let us pray. God of mercy and grace,

the eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things that we may come to the help of all in need, though Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord.

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.

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

Brief silence

God of Creation, we rejoice in the beauty of warmer weather, lush flowering shrubs, new growth sprouting in our gardens and flower beds, and we praise you for the abundance you have made for us in this world. May we always be mindful to care for our environment in order to better show our gratitude to you. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer

God of Relationships, as we see the effects of the pandemic begin to recede, we are grateful for the opportunity to join together once again and be with our friends and loved ones. Teach us to seek out and re-connect with our community of faith and our greater society. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer

God of Healing, make us more mindful and compassionate toward those who still struggle with illness, sorrow, loneliness and food insecurity. Instill in our hearts and minds the instinct to share what we have – not only our money and goods, but our time.

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

- Mr. Nyathi (the father in the family in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe that Beth and Rick Walker stayed with) who died on 5/21
- Richie (friend of Chris Meetze) who died of a heart attack on 5/18
- Bryon Schmidt (family friend of David & Marsha Gerhardt) who died in a boating accident over Memorial Day weekend

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Charles Levene (father of Terri Pries) who is recovering from surgery
- Cheryl Newton as she deals with ongoing health concerns
- Abby Teasdale who is recovering from brain surgery on 6/3
- Nancy Malik (mother of Colleen Sousa) who is recovering after a recent hospitalization and continuing treatment for lung cancer
- Dick DePasquale as he recovers from surgery on 6/1 to repair his bicep following an injury
- 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

And for those we name before you, silently or aloud

Brief silence

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer

Gracious God, we give thanks for this community of people at Bethlehem Lutheran as we commit to grow together in faith and learning. We pray for our pastors and our church leaders as they guide our community in ways of Christian love. This week we pray for those on our monthly prayer list and we lift up five families from our congregation - Gary and Paula, Jeff and Julie, Jim and Sherry, Frank and Jane, John and Paulette. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer

God, of Compassion, you know our needs better than we do ourselves. We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace.
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.

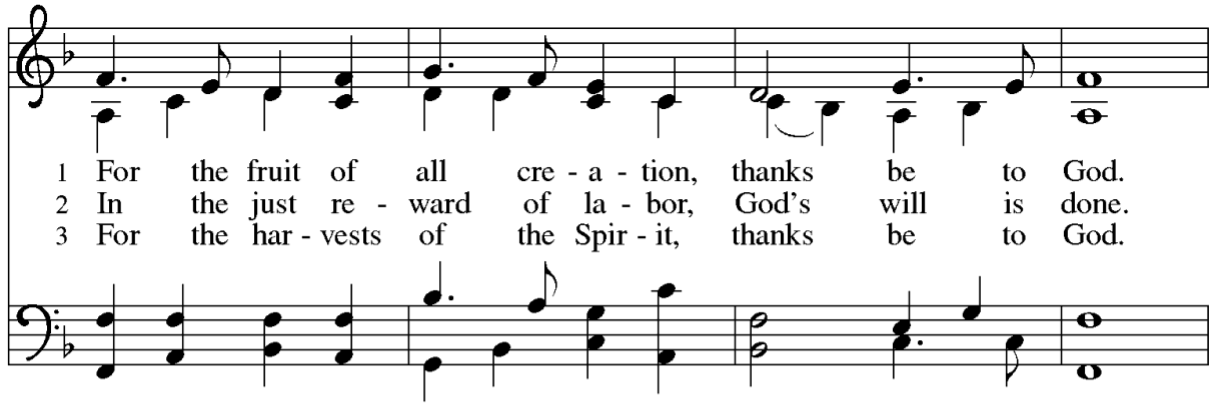
Save us from the time of trial
 and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,
 and the glory are yours,
 now and forever. Amen

Benediction:

The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, † be upon you now and forever.

Amen.



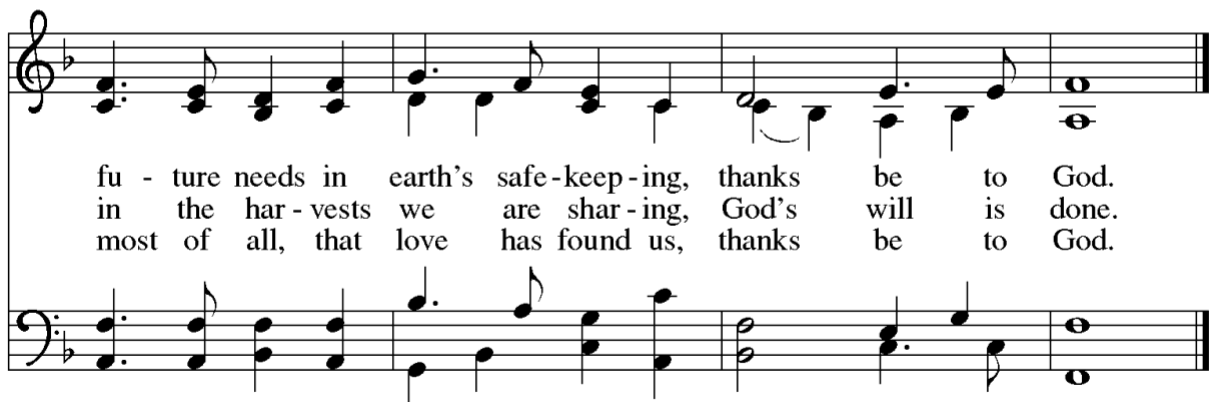
1 For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.
 2 In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will is done.
 3 For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God.



For these gifts to ev - 'ry na - tion, thanks be to God.
 In the help we give our neigh - bor, God's will is done.
 For the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God.



For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are sleep - ing,
 In our world - wide task of car - ing for the hun - gry and de - spair - ing,
 For the won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con - found us,



fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.
 in the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will is done.
 most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000

Music: AR HYD Y NOS, Welsh traditional; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958

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Outside USA: Arr. from *The English Hymnal*. © Oxford University Press 1906.

Dismissal:

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude:

Postlude on “Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise”

Wilbur Held

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!

Thank you to Pastor David Gerhardt... *for proclaiming God’s Word and providing Sunday morning worship leadership while Pastor Amy is recovering from her recent surgery. Pastor Gerhardt is a retired ELCA Pastor and member of this congregation. We are grateful for his witness among us!*

Pr. Amy continues to recuperate from her recent knee replacement surgery. She is currently working a reduced schedule and coordinating pastoral care with Pastor Hoffman. 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.

Calendar for June 13 – June 20

(Last updated on 6/9/21 at 12 noon, visit <https://blcfairport.org/event-directory/> for updates)

Sunday, June 13

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

Monday, June 14

6:00 pm 2nd Sunday Planning
Meeting
([Join](#) or use ID 868 6979 8493)

Tuesday, June 15

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

Wednesday, June 16

9:30 am Bible Study - Hybrid
(In-person or [Join](#) via Zoom –
ID 943 3691 2942)
9:30 am Education Planning
Meeting
([Join](#) or use ID 871 8823 9638)
1:00 pm Men's Lunch at Penfield
Wegmans (*note the change
from Zoom to in-person!*)

Thursday, June 17

6:30 pm BLC Council
([Join](#) or use ID 856 5035 0877)
7:00 pm Quilts for Lutheran
World Relief

Friday, June 18

Pastor's Sabbath

Saturday, June 19

9:00 am Eagle Scout Bike
Restoration Project

Sunday, June 20

Senior Recognition Sunday

8:30 am Facebook
Livestream Worship
10:00 am In-person Worship
([Reservation required](#))
11:30 am BLC On the Go! Wacky
Kickball at Center Park with
Marcy Adams
7:30 pm LYO

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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.

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!

The Mystery of Growth

In elementary school, when children learn about plants they inevitably plant a small seed in a clear plastic cup and watch it grow. This helps as they learn the parts of plants: leaf, stem, roots. As we get older we get more sophisticated in our ability to explain the details of the plant and the growth we see, but on some level the growth itself remains a mystery. Why do some plants thrive and others fail? Was it the soil? Too much water? Too little? And what of those plants growing in the tiny cracks in between slabs of concrete?

The growth of faith is a similar mystery. We can do the best we can to provide good soil, in the form of teachers and mentors, parents and pastors. Still, the faith seems to take root and grow in some people and not in others. And then there are people raised in the worst conditions who grow to be strong people of faith.

Jesus reminds us that faith is a gift which comes to us from God. We cannot control it in ourselves, and we cannot control it in others. We can plant, we can water, and then we can sleep and wake until the plant grows. In the end it is God who brings the growth and the Holy Spirit who gives us faith. As people of God we are called to be good soil. As people of God we are called to trust that God will do what we cannot. Faith will grow, and the church will flourish, not because of our grand schemes and plans, but because God will have it no other way.

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

