



"Invited Home"

*Christmas Eve
5:30 pm Family Worship*



BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

48 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY ~ (585)

223-0634 ~ www.blcfairport.org

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

Welcome!

We are so glad to have you share in worship at Bethlehem on Christmas Eve. If you are visiting, please introduce yourself to one of the pastors – they would love to greet you personally! At this time, we ask all worshipers to wear masks in worship.

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. 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.

Our Perrin Street entrance is accessible. Please ask an usher or greeter for help if you need assistance operating the lift.

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

Friday, December 24, 2021 ~ 5:30 Family Worship
“Invited Home”

Prelude:

Chorale Prelude on ‘Vom Himmel hoch, da komm’ ich her’ Johann Pachelbel
(From Heaven Above to Earth I Come)

Prelude on the Sussex Carol Russell Schulz-Widmar

Pifa (Pastoral Symphony) G. F. Handel
from *Messiah* arr. Robert Gower

Noël No.10: “Noël grand-jeu et duo” Louis-Claude Daquin
from *Livre de noëls*, Op. 2

There is no room for Mary and Joseph in the inn. They are displaced from their home, journeying to fulfill their civic requirements to be counted in the census. And yet, the time comes to give birth where they are, and so a humble home is found. A place is made, among the feeding trough, in a cramped room abounding with chaos. In many ways, Jesus is born without an invitation, and yet, he devotes his life to inviting people who are cast out. In the same way, we might imagine the story of Christmas as God’s invitation to be welcomed home despite all barriers. How will we respond?

SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Call to Worship:

An unmarried teenage girl was invited—
to carry Christ into this world.

An ordinary carpenter was invited—
to be a father to a child unlike any other.

The shepherds were invited—
outcast and isolated, included at the manger.

The Magi were invited—
foreigners and seekers, included at the manger.

And if she was invited, and he was invited, and they were invited—
then we can trust that we too are invited.

This story is for us.

This love is for us.

Family of faith, this is our invitation. Welcome home.

Amen.

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O, come ye, o come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the king of angels:

Refrain: O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest:

Refrain

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
Refrain

Prayer of the Day:

Gracious God,

Your story is one that forever invites us
to be our full selves,
to take up space,
to go where we feel called,
and to allow this community to feel like home.

So use these gifts to keep building your home here. With gratitude as tall as the ceiling, we pray.

Amen.

Anthem: How Great Our Joy

traditional German carol
arr. Hugo R. Jüngst

The Children's Choir (Raelynn Clare, director)

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Gospel: Luke 2:1-20 (From Spark Story Bible)

Pop-Up Christmas Program

*All are welcome to take part in this one-of-a-kind retelling of the Christmas story!
Choose which part you'd like:*

Mary or Joseph

Barn animal (goat, sheep, donkey or cow)

Angel

Shepherd

Wise Person or star

Then watch for your part! You'll be invited to pick up a simple costume near the entrance to the church and process forward while we sing. You'll stay up front for the rest of the program, taking part in the growing live nativity scene in the chancel.

Thank you for being part of telling the good news of great joy on this Holy Night!

PART I: MARY AND JOSEPH

As the Marys and Josephs come forward, the congregation sings:

"Away in a Manger" (ELW 277)

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

PART II: THE ANIMALS

*As the goats, sheep, cows or donkeys come forward, the congregation sings:
“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly” (ELW 276)*

Infant holy, infant lowly,
for his bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing
Christ the child is Lord of all.
Swiftly winging, angels singing,
bells are ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child is Lord of all!

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping
vigil till the morning new
saw the glory, heard the story,
tidings of a gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,
praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the child was born for you!
Christ the child was born for you!

PART III: ANGELS

*As the angels come forward, the congregation sings:
“Angels We Have Heard on High” (ELW 289)*

Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo;
gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heav'nly song? *Refrain*

Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn king. *Refrain*

PART IV: SHEPHERD

*As the shepherds come forward, the congregation sings:
“Go Tell It on the Mountain” (ELW 290)*

Refrain: Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev’rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching, o’er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *Refrain*

The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born;
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

PART V: WISE PERSONS AND STAR

*As the Star and Wise Persons come forward, the congregation sings:
“The First Noel” (ELW 300)*

The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*

And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain*

This star drew near to the northwest,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay. *Refrain*

Then entered in those wise men three,
full rev'rently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense. *Refrain*

PART VI: CONCLUSION

*When the narrator concludes, the congregation sings:
“Hark the Herald Angels Sing” (ELW 270, ST 1 and 3)*

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.”
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic hosts proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

Offertory Prayer:

Let us pray. Good and loving God,

**Your story is one that forever invites us
to be our full selves,**

to take up space,

to go where we feel called,

and to allow this community to feel like home.

So use these gifts to keep building your home here.

With gratitude as tall as the ceiling, we pray. Amen.

Distribution of the Light:

The pastor will light a candle from the Christ Candle and then will begin to move down the aisle lighting the candles of the congregation in this manner: the worshiper nearest the center aisle will receive the light and in turn give the light to the one by their side. The lighted candle is never tilted, but is always held upright when passing the light to another so that the hot wax will not be spilled.

A Christmas Carol:	<i>Silent Night, Holy Night</i>	ELW #281
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Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child. Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar, heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

(Hum fourth verse)

The Prayer:

Gracious God, bathe us always in the light of your Word made flesh, Jesus Christ
our Lord.

Amen

WE LEAVE TO SERVE:

Benediction:

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child. Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

(Candles may be extinguished, using the foil snuffers provided. Do not remove your mask to extinguish your candle. Please return your candles and foil snuffers to an usher as you leave the sanctuary.)

Hymn:	<i>Joy to the World</i>	ELW #267
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Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

Dismissal:

Christ is born! Go in joy and peace!

Thanks be to God.

Postlude:

In dulci jubilo, BWV 729
(In sweet rejoicing)

J. S. Bach

***Christmas Poinsettia Donations
and/or contributions to
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS)
were made to the glory of God by the following:***

Suzanne & TJ Antanoff in honor of Jan & Howard Sharp
and in memory of Grace & Gene Garvey, and June Sharp

Ed & Joan Bangel

Donald & Susan Cardinal in memory of grandparents

Sherry & Jim Cook in honor of our grandchildren, Allison, Braeden, and Caitlin
Paoni and in memory of our parents, Howard & Myrtle Cook
and Rod & Jane Johnson

Nancy Fehse in memory of Anna Steuerwald

Sandy Goehle

Ruth & Jeff Hedin in memory of E. Edward Hahne

Pam Heiple in memory of Mike and Bob

Jim & Allyson Jefferis

Dick & Linda Keefer in honor of loved ones

Kim Kulik in honor of Don Raw Jr,
and in memory of Terri Lynn (Raw) Beach-Holder

Lil Lassen-Ward

Bob & Judy Lohr in memory of Allen & Dorothy Lohr
and Edward & Loretta Baldasari

LYLAS partner in honor of Kathy Moragne

Rolf Maxa in memory of John Feger

Kathy Moragne in memory of George & Bernice Stevens

Frank & Gabriele Nardozzi in memory of Erna & Gerhard Schlueter,
Frank Nardozzi, and Irene Cortini

Joan & Wayne Osgood in honor of Mary Osgood
and in memory of Bob Osgood

Howard & Janet Sharp in memory of our parents

*Larry & Ros. Siegel in honor of our grandson, Tavis David Macomber
and in honor of our children David & Leann*

Kay Slattery in memory of Willard Ekegren, father of Kay Slattery

Anita Trabold

Neil Vokes in memory of Ardis Vokes

*Pastor Amy & Hans Walter-Peterson in honor of our godchildren, Madeleine,
Isabel, Nathaniel & Micah, and in memory of Hans' dad, James Peterson*

GerryAnn & Wayne Westcott in honor of our grandchildren

*Maribeth Wilke in memory of Mitch Wilke, Ed & Paula Hitchings,
and Eddie Hitchings*



*Our Christmas tree is given to the glory of God by **Jim and Donna Berner** in
honor of their family.*

*The wreaths which decorate our Sanctuary are given to the Glory of God by **Brian
Edwards** in memory of his parents Tom and Gert Edwards, his aunt Ann Rasbeck
and his grandparents Henry and Charlotte Müller.*

*The wreaths that adorn our church entrances are given to the glory of God by
Karen Bigenwald in honor of her family and in memory of her parents Isabelle
and Sam Mohr.*

Merry Christmas!

We are so glad you have shared in worship with us this Christmas Eve.
We wish you and yours a blessed Christmas!

Worship: Our worship time each week is on Sunday at 8:55 am (both in-person and livestream). Visit our website – blcfairport.org/shareinworship – for information on how to participate in the livestream. If you are joining us in-person, we ask people to wear masks while moving through our facility, in worship, and during Sunday morning faith formation activities. Look at the Gathering Again page on our website, for the latest updates.

To receive the full announcements and additional content about upcoming events and activities, please read the Weekly Star (available in hard copy on Sundays and/or by email each week): To subscribe, go to www.blcfairport.org and scroll down to sign up for reminders and special announcements.



Calendar for December 26 – January 2

(Last updated on 12/20/21 at 12 noon, visit <https://blcfairport.org/event-directory/> for updates)

Sunday, 12/26

1st Sunday of Christmas

8:55 am Worship with
Communion (in-person
and livestream)
No Children's Choir

Monday, 12/27

Tuesday, 12/28

2:00 pm Support Group
for Caregivers

Wednesday, 12/29

No Bible Study
No Chancel Choir
6:15 pm Folk Group
No Chancel Choir

Thursday, 12/30

7:00 pm Quilt Tying

Friday, 12/31

2:30 pm Dulcimer
Rehearsal

Saturday, 1/1

Sunday, 1/2

*2nd Sunday of
Christmas/Epiphany/
Lessons and Carols*

8:55 am Worship with
Communion (in-person
and livestream)
No Children's Choir

Merry Christmas! The Church Office will be closed... December 27 -

December 31 in observance of the Christmas and New Year's holidays and for scheduled time away for Beth and Pastor Amy. Pastor Hoffman will provide coverage for pastoral care emergencies this week. Please contact her directly, if needed.

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!

In-Person Meetings at BLC: Submit details at <https://blcfairport.org/blc-facility-request/> for each planned meeting, event and activity at BLC. This allows us to check for availability, reserve the space, and plan accordingly. Please contact the church office to confirm or with any questions following your submission.

Invitations

I've been thinking about a universal truth—the way we all want to be invited in. We want the door to be opened with cheers of, "You're here!" We want the clerk at the store to ask how we're doing, and the waiter to wink at us and whisper, "Good choice." We want the barista to learn our names, which people call being "a regular," but it feels more like being known. We want the stranger to help us pick up our sodas when the case breaks, and the woman to put her bag in her lap on the subway, which is to mean, "Come, you can sit by me." We cherish every open palm wave from the child in the grocery store and every city church with open doors when the organist plays.

At the end of the day we are all just a collection of heart and bones walking through this world, exchanging invitations, saying to one another in a million little ways— come matter here. Come make a difference here. Come be you, here.

Jesus didn't receive much of an invitation.

No one moved their bag to their lap, or opened the door to the inn and said, "You're here!" Still, he came.

What a gift it is
to have a God
who does not wait on my invitation. What a gift it is
to have a God
who can't imagine
being anywhere but here.

Prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

