



*Sunday, December 5, 2021*  
*Second Sunday of Advent*  
*"Laying the Foundation" ~ Peace*



# BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

48 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY ~ (585)

223-0634 ~ [www.blcfairport.org](http://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 today. 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.

**Today's service will be recorded and live-streamed.** Our camera operators take care to focus on worship leaders and don't regularly film worshipers. In the movement of the service, glimpses of people may occur. Please speak with a pastor if you have concerns.

**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.

**Holy Communion:** All are welcome to share in Christ's meal of forgiveness and grace. Children who do not yet commune are welcome to come forward for a blessing. (If you feel your child is ready to receive or have additional questions, please speak with one of our pastors.) Please see additional notes about the Sacrament in the service portion of the bulletin.

**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.

## Today's Worship Team

We all contribute to worship: lifting our voice in prayer and song, bowing our heads in prayer, opening our ears to hear the Word, and extending our hands to receive the Sacrament. Are you willing to serve in one of these additional roles to contribute to worship this week? Put your name on the sign-up in the narthex and grab the corresponding bulletin so we know the role is filled by you!

**Acolyte:** *Lights the altar candles during the prelude and extinguishes altar candles during the final hymn, bringing the light of Christ out into the world! May robe and sit on the chancel or sit within the congregation during worship. All ages who can safely handle fire and reach the candles are welcome to serve!*

**Glass Washer:** *Washes communion glasses either immediately following worship or after Faith Formation for All. Instructions are posted in the sacristy. Many hands make light work so grab a friend to help! (This is also a great opportunity for a household to serve together!)*

**Offering:** *Sit in the congregation and bring the offering trays from the entrance of the sanctuary forward to the altar during the offertory, giving our congregation's gifts to the glory of God! Pair up with a child if you'd like, so they can have a hands-on role in worship!*

**Communion Assistants (2):** *Sit in the congregation and come forward at the time of communion (when the congregation begins to sing "Lamb of God") to serve the wine/grape juice for communion. Must be able to hold a tray steady and speak the words, "Blood of Christ shed for you!"*

Thank you also to those serving as Assisting Minister, leading the Children's Sermon, providing Special Music, and serving on Altar Guild, Bread Guild, Wine Guild, Hospitality Team (Usher, Greeter and Fellowship Hosts) and Livestream Team! For more information about any of these roles or to sign up to serve, please contact Beth in the church office or one of the Pastors.

*Thank you for your participation and your overflowing grace and encouragement to one another as we work together to bring worship to life each week!*

**Sunday, December 5, 2021 ~ Second Sunday of Advent**  
***“Laying the Foundation” ~ Peace***

Prelude:

Creátor Alme Síderum  
(Kind Creator of the Stars)

Philip G. Kreckel



*“Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long and how deep his love is.”*

*Ephesians 3:17b-18 (NLT)*

*Along with welcoming special guests, each anniversary Sunday celebration is an opportunity to recall a piece of music or form of worship that would have been common among those who came before us at Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Today’s worship features a favorite hymn of our guest today, as well as a number of hymns that are listed as “BLC Favorites” – including one from the Service Book and Hymnal! Otherwise known as “the red book”, the Service Book and Hymnal was the primary worship book from its publication in 1958 until it was replaced by the Lutheran Book of Worship (a.k.a., “the green book” in 1978). The hymns listed as “BLC Favorites” are those hymns BLC worshipers counted among your favorites when asked in spring of 2020.*

*In the miraculous birth of John the Baptist, we see the foundation of what is to come. We see how interwoven his story is with Jesus’ origin story. When Zechariah regains his voice, his imagination is also restored. He offers deep praise for God’s tender mercy, and casts a hopeful vision for his own child. He sings blessings into John’s being. This lays the foundation for John’s life. In turn, John will go on to prepare the way for Jesus who will guide us all in the way of peace. In this week, we focus on making space—in our lives and our imaginations—for God’s blessings to break through.*

## SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Gathering Hymn: *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry*

ELW #249

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.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath:

The Morrisette Family

As we reflect on the foundation of our faith in our lives, we gather together around the candle of peace.

The home we long for is a home that knows peace—

peace that rests between us and our grief,

peace around our anxiety,

peace between us and our self-criticism,

peace amidst our relationships,

peace at the core of our being,

peace hovering through and in our world.

The home we long for is a home that knows peace.

So today we light the candle of peace—as a reminder and as a prayer.

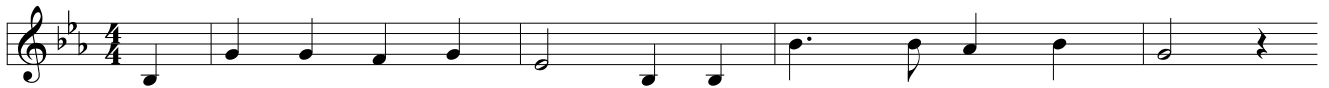
Let it be so. Amen.

Advent Hymn:

*We Light the Advent Candles*

Vanessa Newton, soloist

( Sing 3 times: ST 1/ All ST 2/ Solo ST 1/ All )



1. We light the Ad - vent can - dles a - gainst the win - ter night,  
2. We light the sec - ond can - dle, and hear God's ho - ly Word,



to wel - come our Lord Je - sus who is the world's True Light,  
it tells us, cling to Je - sus, pre - pare to meet your Lord,



to wel - come our Lord Je - sus who is the world's True Light.  
it tells us, cling to Je - sus, pre - pare to meet your Lord!

Let us pray. God, you speak a good news language.

**Quiet our minds and shore up our faith. Settle our hearts and steady our breathing. Help us find our rest in you as we listen for your good news. Through Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.**

## **WE HEAR GOD’S WORD**

### **Reading: Philippians 1:3-11**

*The apostle Paul was the pastor of many new churches. He writes in this letter about his joy to be in partnership with the Christians of Philippi. Listen to how tender-hearted Paul, sometimes a stern preacher, is with his friends as he encourages them to grow in love and knowledge.*

<sup>3</sup>I thank my God every time I remember you, <sup>4</sup>constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, <sup>5</sup>because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup>I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup>It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God’s grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. <sup>8</sup>For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup>And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight <sup>10</sup>to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, <sup>11</sup>having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Special Music:

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

*PICARDY*

arr. by Kevin McChesney

The Chancel Bells (Raelynn Clare, Director)

The gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

## **Gospel: Luke 1:57-80**

<sup>57</sup>Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. <sup>58</sup>Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. <sup>59</sup>On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. <sup>60</sup>But his mother said, "No; he is to be called John." <sup>61</sup>They said to her, "None of your relatives has this name." <sup>62</sup>Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. <sup>63</sup>He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And all of them were amazed. <sup>64</sup>Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. <sup>65</sup>Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. <sup>66</sup>All who heard them pondered them and said, "What then will this child become?" For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him. <sup>67</sup>Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy: <sup>68</sup>"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. <sup>69</sup>He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, <sup>70</sup>as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, <sup>71</sup>that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. <sup>72</sup>Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, <sup>73</sup>the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us <sup>74</sup>that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, <sup>75</sup>in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. <sup>76</sup>And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, <sup>77</sup>to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. <sup>78</sup>By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, <sup>79</sup>to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."<sup>80</sup>The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

### Sermon

- Nehemiah 8:10 - "Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is my strength."
- Psalm 118:14 - "The Lord is my strength and my song. The Lord has become my salvation."
- Psalm 92:4 - "I sing for joy at the works of your hands."
- Isaiah 12:2 - "Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid."

- Lamentations 3:19-24 - " I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. I will remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. YET this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness O lord. I say to myself, 'the Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for the Lord.'"



Hymn of the Day: *Christ, Be Our Light*

ELW 715

This hymn is a favorite of our guest today, Pastor Gerhardt!

### Confession and Forgiveness:

In our scripture passage for today, Zechariah, a new father, speaks to his newborn son, John the Baptist, for the very first time. I want you to imagine yourself in his shoes... What would you say to a newborn sleeping in your arms? What would you want them to know on their very first day? What would feel important?

I imagine that all of you would speak words of love. It's impossible not to speak words of love when you're holding a baby, and yet as we grow up, that skill tends to become harder for us to practice. So let us return to our foundation—to words of love, starting with love for ourselves.

Let us pray the prayer of confession together. Holy God,

**When John was Born, Zechariah leaned down and whispered words of love into his ear. We know that you do the same for us, day in and day out, yet we fail to hear it. We forget that in the beginning we were made good. We doubt that we could possibly be enough. We hustle for our self-worth and wear ourselves out aiming for perfection. We deflect words of praise. We hide behind shiny first impressions. Forgive us. Trusting our worth is the hardest job. Open our ears as you open our hearts, so that we might rest on the foundation of goodness you have laid for us. Gratefully we pray, amen.**

Family of faith, No matter how old we get, God continues to say to us: "You are loved; you are forgiven." That is the foundation of our lives. That is the truth upon which we build our home. So breathe deeply. There is grace and peace here. Join me in proclaiming this good news:

**We are loved. We are forgiven. We are claimed. This is our foundation. Thanks be to God. Amen.**



## The Prayers of the People:

*Our prayers are always offered on behalf of the whole community.  
Where indicated the congregation will respond:*

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Text: Taizé Community

Music: WAIT FOR THE LORD, Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994

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Eternal God, you hold firm amid the changes of this world. Hear us now as we pray for the church, the world, and everyone in need.

*A brief silence.*

God of days gone by, and God of the here and now—we understand the story of Zechariah. We know what it's like to be speechless. We know what it's like to be awestruck. We know what it's like to change plans and leave everyone whispering. What we don't always know is what the next right step is. We crave your voice in our ear—guiding our steps, revealing the way. We wait for you, Lord.

*(Wait for the Lord...)*

Today, God, we pause to give you thanks for the things that leave us speechless—for love at first sight, for the moments when the doctor says the scan is clear, for the family that runs to meet us at the airport and welcomes us home, for every small miracle and concentrated beauty in our life—we are awestruck. We are speechless. We are so deeply grateful.

But in between whispers of deep gratitude, are people who are speechless for other reasons. We are speechless because of the suffering and despair, grief and loss, violence and injustice in our world. With every young person killed in the street or at school, we lose our breath. With every threat of violence, we lose our words. With every updated report on climate change, we lose our peace. And the cycle goes on and on and on. Creator God, who breathed life into us, give us a voice to speak gratitude in the face of beauty, and justice in the face of destruction. Give us words to heal where there is hurt and to invite where there is isolation. We wait for you, Lord.

*(Wait for the Lord...)*

There are so many things that leave us speechless, O God, but we never lose your words of love and hope. Bring your presence to those who are hurting today.

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

- Ivan (father of Chris) who died on 12/2
- Doris (mother of Jeff) who died on 11/21
- Betty who died on 11/19

*We pray for those in need of healing, especially:*

- Doris (mother of Amy) who is recovering at home following a hospitalization for pneumonia
- Carrie who is recovering from surgery scheduled for 12/3
- 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

We give you thanks for all who give voice to our faith through this community of faith. Today, we pray especially for John & Robin, Jason & Kristen (Kaitlynn), Brendan & Vera, John & Terri (Ryan), Rebecca, Jeff & Terri.

We trust that you know all that we need. Thank you for always inviting us home so that we might find our place with you. Through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, we pray and sing...

*(Wait for the Lord...)*

## **WE SHARE GOD'S MEAL:**

The Peace:

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:

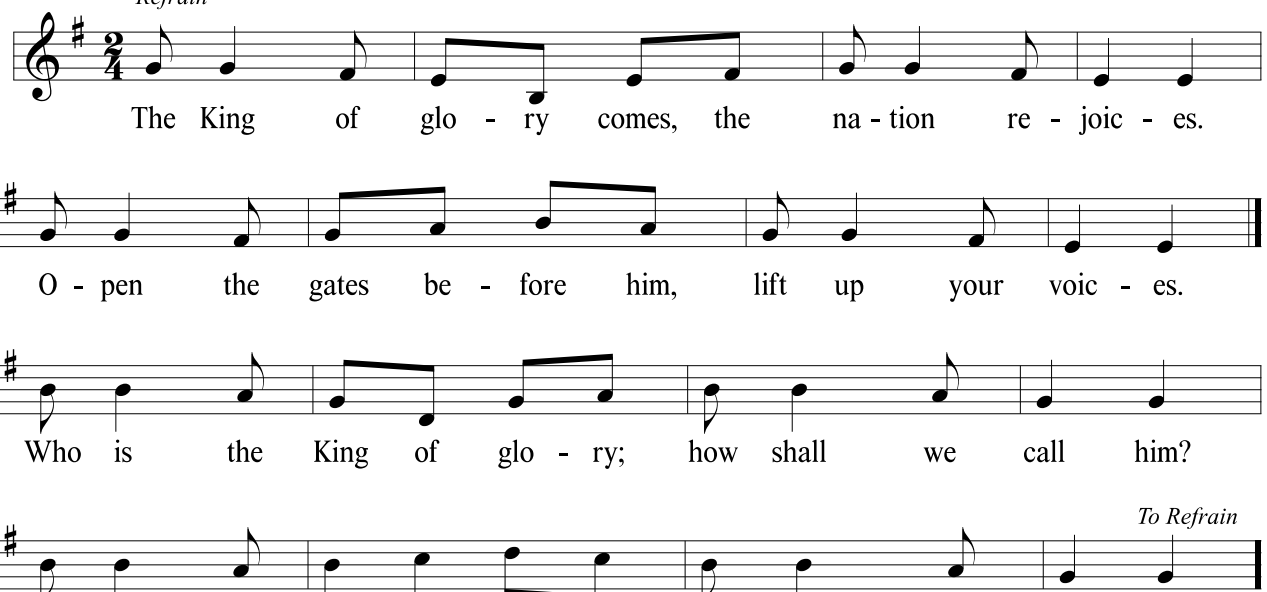
Every Valley

text: Isaiah 40: 4, 5  
music: John Ness Beck

The Chancel Choir (Jim Jefferis, Director)

## Offertory:

*Refrain*



The King of glo - ry comes, the na - tion re - joic - es.

O - pen the gates be - fore him, lift up your voic - es.

Who is the King of glo - ry; how shall we call him?

He is Em - man - u - el, the promi - sed of ag - es. *To Refrain*

Text: Willard F. Jabusch

Music: Israeli traditional

Text© 1968, 1995 Willard F. Jabusch, admin. OCP Publications

## Offertory Prayer:

Let us pray. Holy God,

**You are our home. You and your goodness are the place we return to, the place we long to lay our head. So today as we offer you these gifts, we pray that you would take this offering and turn it into ministry. Use these gifts to transform the world we live in to better reflect the home you have envisioned for us—a home of peace, a home built on the foundation of love. Gratefully we pray, amen.**

## Words of Institution:

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and wine  
**draw us together into a community of peace.**  
Be among us in this meal.  
**And form us to be your home in the world.**

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**

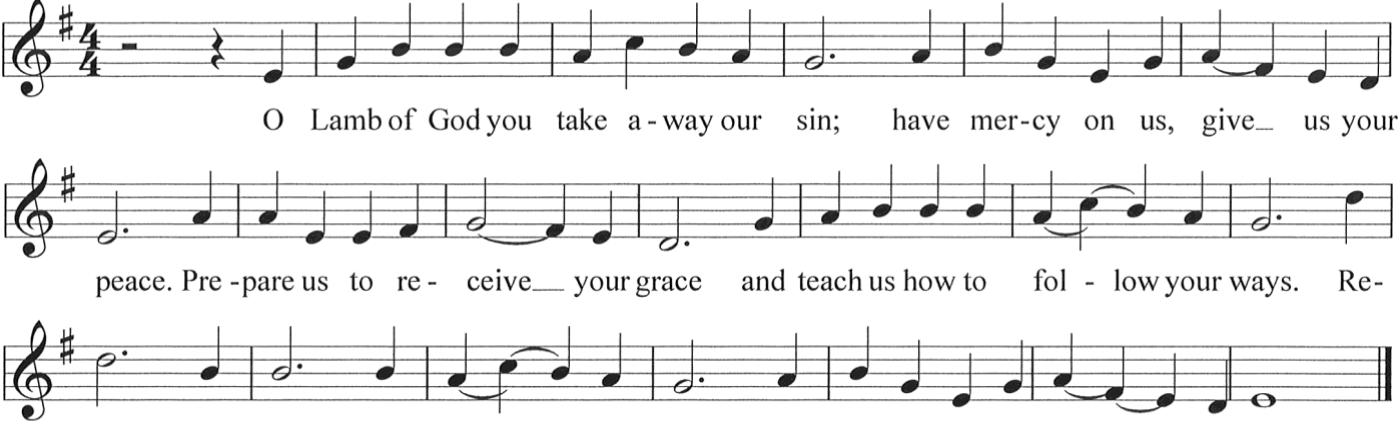
Invitation to Communion:

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.  
**And let these gifts to us be blessed!**

*Distribution of Communion:*

*Please come forward at the direction of the worship leaders. All are welcome to share in Christ's meal of forgiveness and grace. Children who do not yet commune are welcome to come forward for a blessing. (If you feel your child is ready to receive or have additional questions, please contact one of the Pastors.) Gluten-free wafers and grape juice are available; please indicate your need to the pastor or communion assistant. You may lower your mask as you receive communion. If you worship through the Livestream and wish to receive communion, please reach out to one of the pastors.*

## The Communion:



O Lamb of God you take a - way our sin; have mer-cy on us, give\_ us your  
peace. Pre - pare us to re - ceive\_ your grace and teach us how to fol - low your ways. Re -  
joice! Re - joice! E - man - u - el has come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Words: David Eck, copyright ©2011  
Tune: VENI, EMMANUEL

100  
YEARS

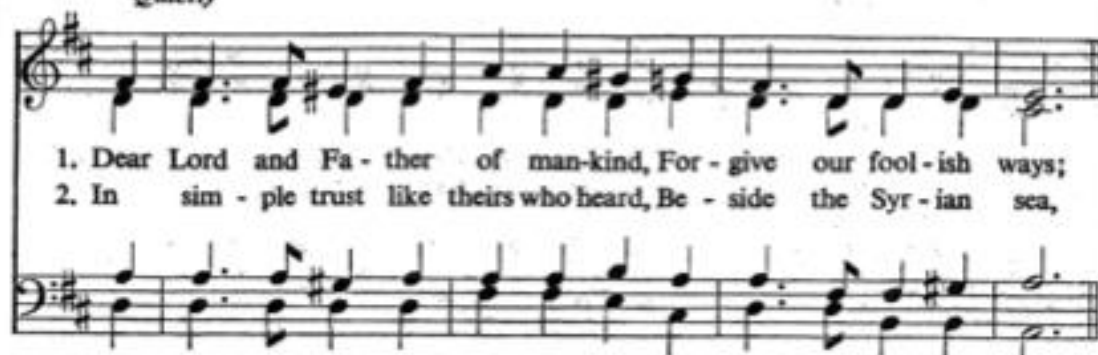
Hymns sung during communion:

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind

This hymn is a BLC favorite! – *see the following page for the music!*

REST. 8 6, 8 8 6.

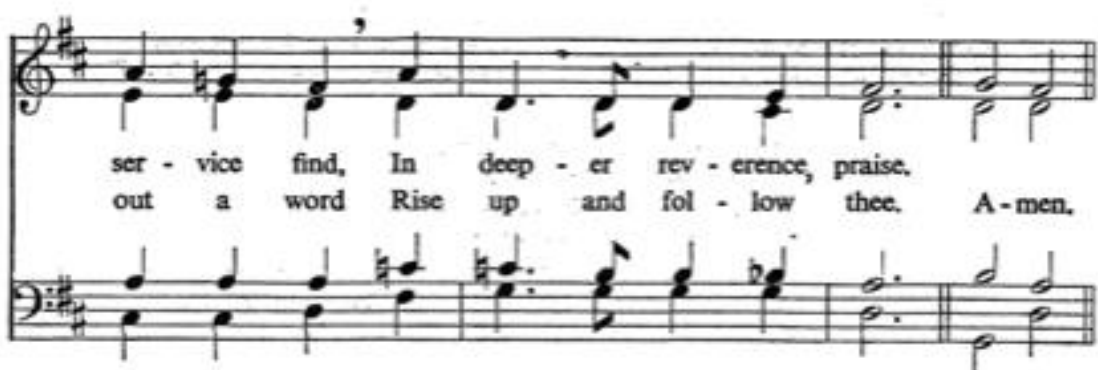
FREDERICK C. MAKER, 1844-1927

*Quietly*


1. Dear Lord and Fa - ther of man-kind, For - give our fool - ish ways;  
2. In sim - ple trust like theirs who heard, Be - side the Syr - ian sea,



Re - clothe us in our right - ful mind, In pur - er lives thy  
The gra - cious call - ing of the Lord, Let us, like them, with -



ser - vice find, In deep - er rev - erence, praise,  
out a word Rise up and fol - low thee. A - men.

3 O Sabbath rest by Galilee,  
O calm of hills above;  
Where Jesus knelt to share with thee  
The silence of eternity,  
Interpreted by love!

4 Drop thy still dews of quietness,  
Till all our strivings cease;  
Take from our souls the strain and stress,  
And let our ordered lives confess  
The beauty of thy peace.

5 Breathe through the heats of our desire  
Thy coolness and thy balm;  
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;  
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,  
O still small voice of calm! Amen.

John Greenleaf Whittier, 1807-92



Hymns sung during communion:

Lord of All Hopefulness

ELW 765

This hymn is a BLC favorite!

Table Blessing:

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

**Amen**

### **WE LEAVE TO SERVE:**

Benediction:

If our life together were a house:

May God's love be the foundation. Jesus – the cornerstone, the Holy Spirit – the windows, ushering light in, and peace be the walls that hold us together. May the blessing of God: Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit be yours, now and always.

**Amen.**

Sending Hymn:

*Fling Wide the Door*

ELW #259

Dismissal:

Go in peace. Christ is near.

**Thanks be to God.**

Postlude:

Let There Be Peace on Earth

Jill Jackson-Miller and Sy Miller



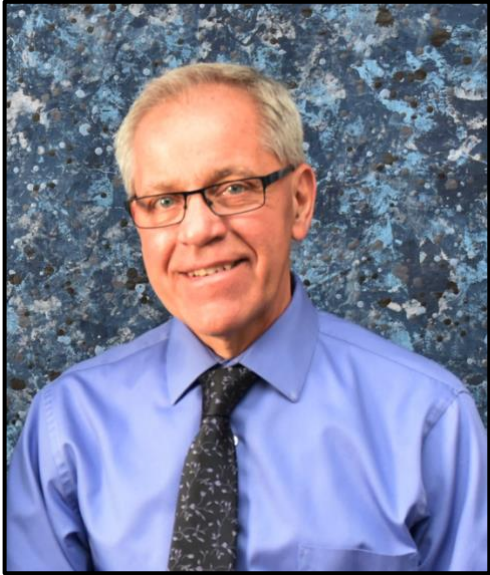
***Welcome to Pastor David Gerhardt!*** *Pastor Gerhardt is a familiar face among us as he and his wife Marsha joined BLC following his retirement as Pastor of Trinity Emanuel Lutheran Church in Gates. We are grateful for his worship leadership this morning as we remember all the ways that we are connected to each other and BLC! Read more about our guest in the insert.*

**Thank you** *to all those who participated in worship this Sunday! If you would like to learn more about participating in a worship role, please speak to one of the co-pastors or contact the church office!*

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## **Rev. David Gerhardt**



Pastor David Gerhardt was born August 8, 1952 in Buffalo, NY and grew up on the family dairy farm in nearby Marilla, NY. After high school, he completed his higher education degrees at Capital University and Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary, both in Columbus, OH.

David was ordained at St. Nicodemus Lutheran Church (Marilla, NY) on August 13, 1978. Over the next 39 years he served congregations in Connoquenessing, PA (1978-1985), Orlando, FL (1985-1991), and at Orlando Luther High School (1991-1992), before coming to Rochester. He served at Trinity Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Gates for 25 years and retired on August 13, 2017. He and his wife, Marsha, are active members of BLC.

Since his retirement from full time ministry, David works part-time for Lifetime Assistance at one of its group homes. He also volunteers as a driver for Meals-On-Wheels and for Westside Express (a transportation service for people who no longer can drive). At BLC, David has led Bible Studies, assists with worship and preaching, and delivers food for Second Sunday. During the school year, he is on "Papa" duty with his grandkids.

Pastor David met Marsha Campbell while serving at his first church near Butler, PA; they married on September 29, 1979. David and Marsha have three grown children who live with their spouses in the Rochester area. Six grandchildren complete the family circle. Their daughter, Rachel Parlett, husband Jacob, and children Clara and Levi, are also members of BLC.

David and Marsha love to travel and look forward to more adventures abroad as soon as they receive the "go-ahead."

## **Happening today (12/5):**

### ***100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sunday!***

- 8:55 am Worship with Communion (in-person and livestream)
- 10:15 am Faith Formation for All!
  - Pre-K to 5<sup>th</sup> grade gathers in the Sunday School Wing
  - 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade gathers in the Confirmation room
  - 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade gathers in the LYO Room
  - Everyone else gathers in the Fellowship Hall!
- 10:55 am Final Blessing for Everyone (Fellowship Hall)
- 11:15 am Children's Choir (Choir Room)

*The reflection below comes from this year's Close to Home Advent Devotional. B&W copies are available in the Narthex. Electronic or color copies can be available through the church office.*

**Read** Luke 1:57-80

**Commentary** Elder Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri

Of the songs at the 2019 Presbyterian Youth Triennium,<sup>4</sup> Rend Collective's "My Lighthouse"<sup>5</sup> was a favorite. As soon as those first bars of the song were played, the auditorium roared and came alive energized by, I believe, the Holy Spirit. The crowd of mostly young, high school age people burst into song, their hands raised high, the choreography performed harmoniously, their voices proclaiming, *"I will trust the promise. You will carry me safe to shore..."* I was moved to tears more than once, blessed by the message their young voices sang with conviction and gusto.

Zechariah's canticle in Luke 1 had such conviction. Having lost his voice for his initial disbelief, Zechariah regains it just in time to praise God for God's mercy and to pronounce a blessing, a prophecy, to his son that would set the tone for John's life and ministry. While the neighbors and relatives gossiped about the miraculous circumstances of John's birth—circumstances that amazed as much as frightened them—they also worried, wondering, "What then will this child become?" (v. 66). Zechariah, filled with the Holy Spirit and knowing his son would become the "prophet of the Most High," (v. 76) spoke words of vision to a newborn that grew strong in spirit and helped lay the foundation into the way of peace. In building God's kin-dom, let us remember there is power in the words that we speak, to anyone, but especially to our young ones as we lay the foundation for their spiritual homes.

*"I will trust the promise. You will carry me safe to shore..."*

*"Your great love will lead me through. You are the peace in my troubled sea..."*<sup>6</sup> thousands of young Presbyterians sang these words that summer at the Elliot Music Hall.<sup>7</sup> Claiming those words for their lives, their song also blessed all who heard and joined them. May we cast this vision of kin-dom and bless others with words and acts of love, hope, and mercy. May these words and acts strengthen our collective spirits and guide us all into the way of peace—guide us all **home**.

<sup>4</sup> The Presbyterian Youth Triennium is a triennial gathering for high schoolers, youth leaders, and young adults sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches.

<sup>5</sup> "My Lighthouse" © Rend Collective/ Integrity Music. [youtube.com/watch?v=reAIJKv7ptU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=reAIJKv7ptU).

<sup>6</sup> "My Lighthouse" by Rend Collective.

<sup>7</sup> The Elliot Hall of Music is on the campus of Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana.

## **100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reflection from Lil Lassen-Ward**

There were no public libraries in first century Galilee and we are unsure if Jesus was literate. But, he answered questions about God with stories...a treasury of tales....by offering parables.

Let's look at 'rootedness' and, check out the Parable of the Prodigal Son. The son 'uproots' himself from family and community but eventually seeks to return home. During his journey home, he practices over and over again what he will say; how he will repent; and beg forgiveness. We are very familiar with this son but let's switch to the father/the parent, as we look at 'roots.' What the father does is very hard to understand.

Picture this. This loving father hitches up his skirts (horrors!) and sprints down the road toward his returning son - welcoming him home before one word of apology has been uttered. What a picture! Definitely very hard to understand.

Picture Hannah, in her grief, voicing her distress to the Lord. Although she found it hard to understand, she returned home and "her countenance was sad no longer."  
"Rebuilding starts with weeping, with tears that fall like rain....."

Picture Job, grieving his tremendous losses. His friends come and sit quietly with him for seven days and seven nights. Though not understood then, we can look back and see that the Lord's love was present.  
"Rebuilding starts with praying, with hopes allowed a voice....."

Picture Ruth, striking out with Naomi to an unknown land and toward an unknown God. Not understanding but held in the care of a loving God.  
"Rebuilding starts with loving.... for love will show the way."

Picture Paul, stuck in prison and pleading for his cloak, books and papers. Though not understanding, he firmly believes "The Lord will rescue me."

And, perhaps there is no need to understand, but first to be 'rooted' into Gods' love....  
"how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is."

As Hymn #598 says, "For by grace you have been saved and even faith is not your own, it's the gift of God for you."