



WORSHIP



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SERVE

WEEKLY STAR FOR DECEMBER 5, 2021

2nd Sunday in Advent



BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN CHURCH

WEEKLY
star



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

100th Anniversary Reflection by 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."

This column will occasionally feature reflections or devotions from members of the congregation (as it does this week!) as one way that we practice discipleship and share ministry together. If you would like to contribute in the future, please contact one of the pastors.

★ Don't forget to look for this **star icon (★)** to easily identify the newest information each week

ARE YOU READY FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP?

Worship with Communion (in-person and online) will be at 8:55 am (no reservations required!)

1. [Facebook Live](#)
2. [Watch On YouTube](#) – Subscribe to our channel
3. [Livestream on the website](#)



Worship the Living God

Lessons for Sunday, 12/5

Philippians 1:3-11 and Luke 1:57-80

Lessons for Sunday, 12/12

Zephaniah 3:14-20 and Luke 3:1-18

Worship: Our worship time each week is on Sunday at 8:55 am (both in-person and livestream). Visit [Share in Worship](#) 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.

Altar Flowers: The flowers on the altar this week were given anonymously to the Glory of God and in honor of BLC's 100th Anniversary Celebration Year! Do you enjoy seeing flowers on the altar? Flowers may be donated to memorialize or celebrate a special event or person. *Contact the church office to place your order!*

Poinsettia Order Forms are due on Sunday, **December 12**. Visit <https://blcfairport.org/poinsettia-sale/> (the link is also in the 'Right Now' menu on our website) to place your order for poinsettias and/or make a donation to support Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) in honor or memory of your loved one. (LIRS). LIRS is the largest faith-based nonprofit dedicated to serving vulnerable immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the U.S. **Simply put, we resettle refugees, reunite children and parents, and rekindle the American Dream.** For more than 80 years, LIRS has been a champion for migrants and refugees from around the globe. Our legacy of compassionate service has made a difference in the lives of more than 500,000 people who have sought safety and hope in America's communities. Our history reflects our own deep immigrant roots and passionate commitment to welcoming newcomers, especially those who are most in need. (<https://www.lirs.org/about/>)

100th Anniversary News

100 YEARS

This week we welcome our own Rev. David Gerhardt as he leads us in worship. In addition to our returning former clergy, we also wanted to lift up and recognize Pastor Dave, who is part of our Bethlehem family. He has stepped up to preach when needed, led Bible studies, and been active in the life of the church. But mostly you will see him worshipping with his family. Thank you, Pastor Dave, for sharing the gospel with us this morning!

A big "thank you" to Pastor Greg Brown, Dr. Catherine Rodland, and Pastor David Nevergall, who were our returning anniversary guests last month. Still under COVID restrictions, it was disappointing that we had to forgo refreshments at our Welcome Back receptions, but we are so thankful that they were with us in person to take part in our celebration!

Have you added an ornament to our 100th Year Anniversary Tree in the narthex? The paper ornaments are located beside the tree or can be one you create yourself. Each ornament represents our service, ministries, and offerings that we lift up to God. For example, Sunday School classes can hang one or more ornaments that relate to their lesson. Shut-in visitors can take an ornament with them for our homebound member to sign, and then hang it on the tree for them. Each BLC family could add an ornament to represent a service or ministry that is especially meaningful. What about a little prayer or written remembrance for a loved one? An ornament can represent a Thanksgiving basket, an Angel Tree gift, a night of caroling, or other act of service that will be offered in the coming weeks. Gradually our tree will be transformed into a full, glory-filled testament to God's presence among us.

We invite you to view the interactive programs on the computers in the narthex. Sit at one of the stations, put on the headphones, and follow the easy instructions to explore the different topics. You will learn more about our history, those who came before us, stories of BLC memories written by our members, videotaped member interviews, and much more!

Be sure to check out the photographs from our various events which can be found on our website at blcfairport.org. Click on the 100th Anniversary link at the top right corner of the home page and look for Event Media.

Grow in Faith and Discipleship

★ **Faith Formation in December:** Gather for conversation and activities around our Advent theme, *Close to Home*. LYO and Confirmation meet in their rooms, pre-K to 5th grade in the Sunday School wing and adults in the fellowship Hall on **December 5, December 12 & December 19** at 10:15 am! No Faith Formation will be held on December 26 or January 2. We'll resume in the New Year on January 9.

★ **Wednesday Morning Bible Study:** Join us weekly at 9:30 am in person in the Fellowship Hall at BLC or on Zoom - use the 'join now' button in the [Calendar of Events](#) to join via Zoom. Throughout the month of December, we will continue to meet in hybrid fashion to study Adam Hamilton's book *The Journey*. This includes a video tour of the places Mary and Joseph traveled on their way to Bethlehem. We will not meet on December 29. Beginning January 5, we will continue to study the **I AM** statements of Jesus as found in the Gospel of John. Join us when your schedule allows! If you have questions, or would like more information, contact Kathy Moragne - kathymoragne@gmail.com

Live Our Faith in Daily Life

★ **Ruth Circle** will meet at BLC on Monday, **December 6** at 1:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will be discussing Chapter 8, God's Peace, Your Peace from the book by Max Lucado "Anxious for Nothing". Our discussion is led by Toni Thompson. All are welcome to join us for study and fellowship. Any questions, please call Ruth Kurtz at 388-2608 or e-mail ruthkurtz22@gmail.com.

★ **Hanging of the Greens:** Saturday, **December 11** at 9:30 am Decorate our Church Home! Hang the greens, put the Chrismon ornaments on the tree, set up the nativity and otherwise help us deck our halls. Contact Bob Stock (rstock@rochester.rr.com or 585-329-2550) if you'd like to participate.

★ **Devotional resources:** The January - March editions of Portals of Prayer and Christ in our home are available in the sanctuary and narthex. We also usually have extra copies of Spark Family Magazine and the Living Lutheran Magazine available at the welcome table in the narthex. If you have questions about any of these resources, please contact the church office!

★ **Dulcimer Concert at BLC!** Christmas Music and more on Friday evening, **December 10** at 7 pm. Rich Towsley will be directing our BLC Dulcimer Ensemble and Senior Strummers Ensemble. Linda Taggart will be directing a hammered dulcimer ensemble. Admission is free. A freewill offering will be collected to support the Perinton Food Shelf. Wear your mask!

Care for One Another

★ **Angel Tree:** Share God's love by fulfilling a need from the Angel Tree! Look for the Angel Tree in the narthex with angel tags listing the requested gift item! Take a tag (or several if you'd like), purchase the gift, wrap and affix the angel tag to the outside of the package. Please contact the church office if you would like a tag mailed to you. There will be boxes in the fellowship hall to collect the gifts. All gifts should be returned to church by **December 19 by 9 am** so they can be delivered on time!

★ **Holiday Greetings!** We have a wonderful card ministry to remember our homebound members throughout the year. In this season of Advent, you are encouraged to take a moment to send notes of encouragement to any and all of the people in our BLC community. If you would like to join the Card Ministry, contact [Donna Berner](#) or 585-314-5732

★ **Thank you!** My dear Brothers and Sisters, I want to thank you for your prayers and words of care, love and compassion over the past couple of months as Amy and I walked with my family through the last days of my father's journey, as well as for the lovely plant at Dad's funeral. The love that we felt from our community at Bethlehem supported and sustained us, and I cannot thank you enough for that. Dad was so appreciative of the fact that people he didn't even know were caring about him and his family and surrounding us with so much love. I am also truly grateful that this congregation was so encouraging and

supportive to Amy so she could be with us for most of that time as well. I have felt blessed to be a part of this community, but even more so in these recent days and weeks. Thank you for your presence and your love. They have been manna to us.

~ Hans Walter-Peterson

★ **Hats off and a big thank you** to all the people at BLC and the Penfield Community Center Knitting Group who knit and crocheted hats and scarves to donate. 225 hats were collected along with a number of scarves! They have been donated to Learning Links at the Pines of Perinton, Saints Place in Pittsford and Open Door Mission who all greatly appreciated them. We will continue to collect and donate hats and scarves throughout the winter months. Any questions please feel free to contact Cathy Gottermeier at cgotterm@rochester.rr.com. Happy Holidays!

★ **Thank you to BLC:** We want to thank our Bethlehem Lutheran Church family for your love and concern for Jerry's fight with leukemia these past several weeks. Your calls, cards, inquiries and hugs have meant such a great deal to us as we have coped with a prolonged hospital stay and a major change in lifestyle. Jerry has been blessed with skilled, caring medical people who have brought him to remission, and we credit much of it to the power of prayer from all those surrounding us. We still have a lot of work to do and a lot of challenges to face, but with your support and God's grace we are able to move through it. Love in Christ, Toni and Jerry Thompson

★ **Call for more BLC Hospitality Team Members:** As we continue to live into our new Sunday morning schedule, we're hoping to bring more people into the hospitality team rotation. We aim to have a team of 4-6 people in place each Sunday who welcome members and guests into our worship space, help them navigate our space and ensure that they have what they need to participate in worship. There is a checklist of tasks and an assigned leader each week. We would love to have you try this role. Contact the office or submit your info at <https://blcfairport.org/hospitality-team-at-blc/> to let us know that you are willing and able to serve in this way. Not sure if this is right for you? Try a week shadowing someone who has been serving or come to a training session to learn more! Date and time for training will be coming soon.



Serve Our Neighbor

★ **2nd Sunday Dinner Ministry on December 12!** *"I was hungry and you gave me to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me to drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in."* -Matthew 25:35. As disciples of Jesus we are called to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, and welcome the stranger. On the second Sunday of every month the dedicated volunteers of the Second Sunday Dinner Ministry prepare and deliver a hot meal to individuals in the Perinton community. We have an urgent need for one more delivery person to ride along with a delivery driver and deliver meals to the Fairport Apartments. If you would like more information or would be able to help, please contact Paulette Costanza at 585-223-9255 or p.stanza@hotmail.com. A HUGE "Thank You" to all those who have given their time, treasures, and talents to serve our neighbors in Christ. You are such a blessing!

★ **The M&SC Committee** explores social and justice issues and has conversations within the committee to understand our individual and world view. Our collective goal is a congregation actively engaged in our local and world communities by being allies, advocates and activists (AAA) with our mission partners. ***New members or visitors to the M&SC committee, ideas about new ministries, and different views and paradigms for engaging in mission are welcome and encouraged.*** Join us for one or all of our upcoming meetings. We offer an opportunity to meet in person at BLC in the Fellowship Hall as well as virtually through a link in the calendar of events on BLC's website. Meetings are typically held the second Wednesday of every month at 6 pm. Please reach out to Julie Owen at jowen@heritagechristianservices.org with interests or questions.

★ **Habitat for Humanity Work Day:** Efforts are continuing to build a core group of about a dozen congregation members willing to commit to a quarterly Habitat for Humanity work day. To date about six have stepped forward. Volunteers at least 16 years old are welcome, particularly those LYO members. Please send your contact information to Mike Joyce at 713.882.4471 or mjoyceusa@yahoo.com. In addition to house building, Flower City Habitat recently purchased a van and tools to enable building of accessibility ramps. Volunteers are needed for that task as well.



Council News

Support BLC While Doing Your Christmas Shopping! Did you know that BLC can benefit from your online shopping? Sign up for AmazonSmile and choose Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Fairport, NY as your designated charity. The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible items to BLC. You will see eligible products marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on their product detail pages. With the Christmas shopping season ramping up, this would be a great opportunity to participate in this program! To get more information or to sign up and shop, go to <https://www.aboutamazon.com/news/community/how-to-sign-up-for-amazon-smile> from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. Contact [Glenda Lockard](mailto:Glenda.Lockard@bclcfairport.org) for more information.

Offering Envelopes: In an effort to be good stewards of our paper resources, we will not order offering envelopes for you this year, unless you specifically request them on or before the end of 2021. Doing so is easy! Visit <https://blcfairport.org/request-2022-offering-envelopes/>, contact the church office or Dave Wideman (dwideman5@gmail.com or 585-309-3618) to request envelopes. Envelopes should be available before the end of the year.

Financial Statements: As year-end 2021 approaches, this would be a good time to review your financial commitment to BLC. If you would like to see a summary of your giving so far this year, please feel free to request a preliminary financial statement so you can plan your giving for the rest of the year. Please contact the BLC financial secretary, Dave Wideman, in person or by email: dwideman5@gmail.com, or by phone at 585-309-3618.

Community News

★ The Perinton Concert Band will present ***Sounds of the Season*** on **Friday, December 10, 2021 at 7:30 pm** in the **Perinton Community Center Gymnasium**, 1350 Turk Hill Road, Fairport, NY. Musical selections will include "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree," "A Chanukah Celebration," Jose Feliciano's "Feliz Navidad," music from *The Polar Express*, along with many other holiday favorites. **The performance will even include a visit from Santa!** The concert is **free** and is sponsored by the Town of Perinton Recreation and Parks. Masks are recommended. **For More Information:** Find us online at <https://www.perintonconcertband.org> or on Facebook and Instagram at Perinton Concert Band.

★ **Pet Sitting:** Some of you may remember Zainab Moya, the youngest child of the family that BLC sponsored from Somalia. She was in second grade when she came and is now a Fairport High School alumni and student at MCC. She is looking to supplement her income by pet sitting. If you have a need for a pet or plant sitter, you can call me for arrangements, Marcy Adams, 585-370-6878 or retiredmarcy@gmail.com. or see me at church. *Occasionally, needs and opportunities are brought to the attention of the church office. While we are not in a position to endorse any specific person or service, we are happy to make connections!*

Announcements for the STAR should be submitted through the office by Wednesday morning at 9 am. Visit www.blcfairport.org and to sign up for reminders and special announcements (including the STAR!)



BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN CHURCH

48 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY ~ (585) 223-0634 ~ www.blcfairport.org
 <https://www.facebook.com/BLCFairport/>

We Ask Your Prayers: *We pray for those whose thanks or needs are known to us.*

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

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

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Doris Walter (mother of Amy Walter-Peterson) who is hospitalized with pneumonia
- Carrie Falzone who is scheduled for surgery on 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

[Click here to view and print the December long-term prayer listing](#) – or contact the church office for a copy!

Calendar for December 5 – December 12

(Last updated on 12/1/21 at 12 noon, visit <https://blcfairport.org/event-directory/> for updates)

Sunday, 12/5

2nd Sunday in Advent **100th Anniversary Sunday**

8:55 am Worship with
Communion with guest
Pastor David Gerhardt
(in-person
and livestream)
10:15 am Faith
Formation for All
11:15 am Children's
Choir

Monday, 12/6

1:00 pm Ruth Circle

Tuesday, 12/7

6:30 pm Re-Opening
Team Meeting
([Join](#) via Zoom -
ID 828 8105 6157)
6:30 pm BSA Troop 2019
Meeting

Wednesday, 12/8

9:30 am Bible Study –
Hybrid (In-person or
[Join](#) via Zoom –
ID 943 3691 2942)
6:00 pm Chancel Bells
6:15 pm Folk Group
6:00 pm Mission & Social
Concerns – Hybrid (In-
person or [Join](#) via Zoom
– ID 812 1431 6292)
7:30 pm Chancel Choir

Thursday, 12/9

6:00 pm Girl Scout Troop
Meeting

Friday, 12/10

Pastor's Sabbath
2:30 pm Dulcimer
Group Rehearsal
7:00 pm Dulcimer
Concert

Saturday, 12/11

9:30 am Hanging of the
Greens

Sunday, 12/12

3rd Sunday in Advent
8:55 am Worship with
Communion (in-person
and livestream)
10:15 am Faith
Formation for All
11:15 am Children's
Choir
12:30 pm 2nd Sunday
Dinner Ministry
(delivery only)

Church Office Hours: We continue to hold remote office hours M, W, Th & F from 9 am to 12 noon. Our co-Pastor's schedules vary from week to week. Both are available for scheduled appointments.

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.
