



Wishing you and yours a Blessed Christmas! In the midst of the chaos that surrounds us, we join Bishop Eaton in wishing you hope this Christmas! ~ Pastor Amy and Pastor Hoffman

This is our second pandemic Christmas. We thought this would be over so long ago. And still, we wear masks; we're physically distant; we can't be with friends and family as we used to do. And also, there's so much that's broken in this world, so much that tells us, "Why have hope? Just give up."

But we have a hope that's stronger than any of this, stronger even than death. The hope of God comes in the form of a tiny baby, a helpless child; nevertheless, who grew to a man and in his fragile strength was willing to die on the cross and was raised again.

I don't know what next Christmas will bring. I don't know what New Year's will bring. But I do know we have hope.

St. Paul put it this way: "May the God of fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may ABOUND IN by the power of the Holy Spirit." Merry Christmas, dear church.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton Presiding Bishop,
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

View Bishop Eaton's Christmas Message on [YouTube](https://youtu.be/iNji_fYl8) (https://youtu.be/iNji_fYl8)



Worship the Living God

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](#)

Lessons for Friday, December 24

Luke 2:1-20

Lessons for Sunday, 12/26

Colossians 2:41-52 and Luke 2:41-52

Lessons for Sunday, 1/2

John 1:1-5; Isaiah 9:2-7; Isaiah 11:1-6;
Matthew 1:18-23; Luke 1:39-45; Luke 2:1-7; Luke 2:8-20;
Matthew 2:1-11

Lessons for Sunday, 1/9

Colossians 2:41-52 and Luke 2:41-52

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

↓ **Two Week STAR:** Please note, this publication is intentionally a 2-week STAR.

The content you see on 12/26 and 1/2 will be inclusive of details through January 9 and will be the same information.

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.

↓ **Thank you!** Liturgy is the work of the people. That has always been the case, never moreso than this year when we continue to adapt to new ways of gathering, changing protocols, and ongoing shifts. Making worship happen safely and creatively has been a team effort that includes musicians, livestreamers, hospitality team members, worship servants, property team members, and so many others, including worshipers! We give special thanks for music staff and all the talented musicians who offer their gifts to the congregation week after week: Raelynn Clare, Music Director; Jim Jefferis, Director, Chancel Choir; and Rich Towsley, Director, BLC Folk Group & Dulcimers. We are especially grateful for their creative offerings in the seasons of Advent and Christmas at BLC. We also give special thanks to Livestream Team, led over the last year by Andy Gates, for sharing technical gifts and for the integral role they play in producing the Livestream services to share with the community. You can see that there really is **a place for you** in making worship happen each week at Bethlehem! If you're searching for a particular way to share your skills, please reach out to a pastor or contact the office and we'll help to connect you!

↓ **Save the Date!** Have you ever wondered how worship planning for each season takes place? Would you like to help shape how we mark the upcoming season of Lent both in worship and in all the other ways we live out our faith within the Bethlehem community? Join us in helping to shape the upcoming Lenten season (which begins on Ash Wednesday, March 2). Mark your calendar for **Thursday, January 13** when we'll gather interested folks to give shape to the upcoming Lenten season. We'll schedule the meeting based on the availability of those who wish to gather, so be sure to let Pastor Amy or Pastor Hoffman know of your interest!

BLC Hospitality Team Members (formerly the role of ushers and greeters). We have an ongoing need for more volunteers. 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 team 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/> and let us know that you are willing and able to serve in this way.

Altar Flowers: We give thanks for all who have contributed greens and poinsettias to beautify our sanctuary this Christmas season! You can view acknowledgements in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

Christmas Eve Worship ~ Friday, December 24

Be sure to read the [updated communication regarding Christmas Eve](#), shared via email on Tuesday, 12/21.

Livestream worship at 7:30 pm (with prelude music beginning at 7 pm)

In-person Opportunities:

5:30 pm (in-person only), be part of re-telling the story of Christmas in our Pop-Up Christmas pageant! No rehearsal required! We are all part of sharing the good news this night in story and song!

7:30 pm (in-person or livestream), we'll sing carols, share communion, and welcome the good news of great joy for all people! Musical Prelude begins at 7:00 pm.

(These in-person, indoor options are safest for those who are fully vaccinated and boosted, but they are not without risk. If you would like to worship in-person, we strongly urge you to take a rapid test before coming to church.)

Limited-Exposure Outdoor Opportunity:

6:15 pm or 8:15 pm - We will gather near the end of each worship on the sidewalk by the Christmas Tree (on the corner of Perrin and Church Streets). One of the Pastors will lead this gathering while the other finishes leading worship inside. We will hear the Christmas Gospel, sing a few carols and light candles. We'll join our voices in singing a candlelit Silent Night, concluding with Joy to the World! We expect this gathering will be brief (15-20 minutes).

Come & Worship Christ the Lord!

100th Anniversary News

100 YEARS

Throughout our 100th Anniversary celebration, from August 2021 through June 2022, we are pleased to welcome back 19 returning guests: 12 clergy (or direct descendants of deceased former clergy) and seven musicians. Traveling at their own expense from as far away as Florida and Colorado, many are bringing their spouses and even other family members. A big “thank you” to those BLC members who have graciously opened their homes and offered accommodations for them!

With the possibility of inclement weather, our January and February guests do not have to travel too far. On January 9, we welcome Rev. Lori Nickoloff. As long-time members of BLC, Pastor Lori, husband Keith, and her family are familiar to many of us. Ordained at BLC in 2018 after obtaining her Master of Divinity from Lutheran Seminary in St. Paul, MN, she is now serving as pastor at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Penn Yan, NY.

On January 23, Rev. Jeff Hedin will lead us in worship. Pastor Hedin formerly served at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Pittsford for many years. Now a retired pastor, he and his wife, Ruth, are members of BLC. We thank him for sharing the Word with us!

Rev. Matthew Nickoloff will be our guest on February 6. Pastor Matthew is the son of Pastor Lori and Keith Nickoloff, and a former member of BLC, where he was ordained. He currently serves as pastor of the South Wedge Mission, an inter-denominational new church start in the South Wedge neighborhood of Rochester. We are blessed that all of our guests have so willingly offered to participate in our anniversary celebration!

Do you know that there are two BLC Time Capsules, one dated 1922 and the other 2001? Would you like to know what each of them contains? Be sure to join us following worship on January 23 as we open these time capsules. John Schmeelk will be with us to provide more information about our history.

Have you ever wondered about the Chrismons, those ornaments with beautiful designs that decorate the tree in the sanctuary? The word Chrismon, a combination of CHRIST and MONogram, dates back to the early Christians who used them to identify themselves to one another. Bethlehem's Chrismons were handmade by some of our members using over 60 different patterns. Learn more about the significance and meaning of our Chrismons on the interactive video on the computers located either in the narthex coatroom or the workroom.



Grow in Faith and Discipleship

Faith Formation: No Faith Formation will be held on December 26 or January 2. We'll resume on January 9.

↓ **Mid Week Bible Study returns on January 5:** We will resume our study of the “I AM” statements of Jesus from the Gospel of John. No need to have come to previous sessions. Join us on Wednesdays at 9:30 am in Fellowship Hall at BLC or on Zoom using the 'join now' button in the [Calendar of Events](#) to join. If schools are closed due to weather conditions, we will meet on Zoom – not in person. Please join us for great conversations! If you have questions, or would like more information, contact Kathy Moragne - kathymoragne@gmail.com



Live Our Faith in Daily Life

↓ **A Support Group for caregivers... Tuesday, December 28:** If you are caregiving for a loved one, an elderly parent, spouse, relative or other loved one, feel free to join us! We meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at 2 pm in person in the Fellowship Hall. The participants will learn from each other; this is not a lecture or class! Please notify Lisa if you are coming so she has the number of attendees to ensure we are following the COVID guidelines. If you have ANY questions, or you are unable to join because you are not able to meet in person, please contact Lisa Rosenbauer (585) 698-6189.

↓ **Men's Breakfast...Wednesday, January 5:** Gather with the men of BLC to share good food and informal Christian fellowship. The group will meet on the 1st Wednesday of the month at 8 am at The Landmark Restaurant in East Rochester. For further information, contact [Jim Berner](#).



Care for One Another

↓ **Homebound Member Birthdays in January:** Anita Trabold (1/3). We encourage you to reach out to members who are not able to attend worship and related activities with us on a regular basis. Birthdays are a great time to remind them that they remain in our thoughts and prayers as members of our community of faith here at BLC. We have a wonderful card ministry to remember our homebound members throughout the year. Watch for an updated directory in the new year. If you would like more information, or would like to participate in BLC's Card Ministry, email [Donna Berner](#) or call 585-314-5732.

↓ **Thank you!** I'd like to thank our BLC family for their prayers, love and support for Bev and me after my accident. Although the recovery continues, each and every day the healing progresses. Thank you too to the angels that helped with the tree lighting. Somehow sharing the light of Christmas took on an even bigger meaning for me and my family. From our house to yours Merry Christmas Blessings and a Very Happy New Year. – Brian Edwards

One More Gift (Will you come and help tie quilts?): Have your Christmas celebrations come and gone by December 30? Do you have time for one more gift? We have several quilts ready to tie for Lutheran World Relief. Can you help? Needles supplied. Small scissors helpful. Join us at BLC in the Adult Education Room on Thursday, **December 30** at 7 pm. With masks.

A big "thank you" to the folks who came out to decorate for Christmas - Bob and Phyllis, Rich and Sue, Donna and Jim, Mary Jane, Sue, Marge, Susie, Brian, John and Bob! The "un-decorating" will take place on Saturday, **January 8** at 9:30 am! We sure could use some "young" legs to climb a ladder and return the bins to the basement downstairs! Thanks for helping out! If you need information, contact Donna Berner!

Prayer Squares are available in the narthex! So what is a Prayer Square? It's a knitted square that can function as a small version of a prayer shawl. Prayer squares give us an opportunity to bless others through a simple, personal encounter designed to leave a lasting impression of God's love. They provide prayers for the people that need the warmth of God. Placed in a pocket or backpack or purse, the prayer square serves as a reminder: that someone has already prayed for you, and also a reminder to pause and pray. Put it in your backpack, briefcase, purse, or car. When you need reassurance, pull it out and you will know that God is everywhere. So grab a square and a prayer, add a message, or write your own prayer and give it to someone you know who may need some of God's comfort. (Prayer Squares are a great way to connect with your BLC prayer partners that were included in the last Quarterly Mailer!)



Serve Our Neighbor

↓ **BLC Angel Tree:** Thank you to everyone who contributed gifts for our Angel Tree Project this year! We provided gifts for families in the community and Grace House. Thanks again for your support and sharing our gifts with neighbors in need. You are a "Shining Light" to these families.

↓ **Save the date for the next Crucial Conversation (over Zoom)!** Join us on Monday, **January 24** and Monday, **January 31** at 7 pm. In partnership with St. Luke's Episcopal Church, we are hosting a presentation and conversation on "Christian Nationalism: the Intersection of Religion and Politics". Our resource for the conversation includes a webinar on the subject that features Bishop Michael Curry (Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church) and Bishop Elizabeth Eaton (Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). Our "crucial conversations" will begin with a presentation by The Very Rev. William H. Petersen, Emeritus Dean and Professor of Bexley Hall Seminary, resident of Fairport and member of St. Luke's Episcopal. As a theologian and historian, Rev. Petersen will provide a framework for engaging the conversation, understanding what is meant by the term "Christian nationalism" and why its emergence is problematic, and how it helps us understand recent events, including what happened at the capital on January 6, 2021. The discussion will be facilitated by Rev. Petersen, Pastor Hoffman and Pastor Amy. Pre-registration is required to participate! Please follow this link to sign up: <https://bit.ly/ZoomJan2022>

↓ **The 30-hour famine** has been a powerful experience our LYO has participated in for years. This year much like everything else in our world, it is going to look much different. The LYO will be participating in a variety of events (subject to change) on **January 15th & 16th**. This will be a day only event (no lock-in). Stay tuned for more information! Please contact Bethany Trippi with any questions.

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 6:15 pm. Please reach out to Julie Owen at jowen@heritagechristianservices.org with interests or questions.



Council News

LAST OPPORTUNITY FOR PHOTOS: Many BLC members missed the opportunity to have their picture taken for the BLC Photo Directory. We are scheduling 2 more opportunities for your family to have their picture taken on Jan 28th or Jan 29th at the church, downstairs in the meeting room with the backdrop. Use the entrance by Pastor Amy's office at the small parking lot in the back of the church to get into the church. Please call Bob Stock (585-329-2550) to schedule your 5 min photo sitting any time from 9am to noon on either day. You can also call him and let him know that it's ok to use your photo from the last Photo Directory 2017 if you don't want to have a new sitting. Anyone that has not had their picture taken or does not respond will not be included in the 2021 Directory. Thank you!

Community News

↓ **Part time job opportunity shared by Jim Berner:** I have been working work part time at URMC, the Flaum Eye Institute since about a week after I retired from the home care agency, in 2016. The eye institute is expanding all the time and bringing in top level researchers from across the world. Projects vary from renovation of existing and developed eye practice sites to preparing labs for the researchers. We are interested in another person to do more of the work that I am doing, as well as preparing to take my position over, in the next couple of years as I have been doing this for 5 years and am 70. I will be ready to back off or out in less than two years. It is something new all the time, the projects are manageable, with relationships developed with the facilities and construction teams at the med center. I am having fun at it, don't have to work, so if it was a drag, I wouldn't be doing it.

There are benefits at part time hours, or they can work as TAR, time as reported. No benefits. (the hours there are limited however) It is an ideal position for someone who might be in a similar spot as myself. You can refer them to me at my cell, 585-314-9432. or my Univ email, at james.berner@urmc.rochester.edu. *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!*

Lutheran Disaster Response - U.S. Tornadoes: On the night of Dec. 10, a devastating outbreak of more than 30 tornadoes swept through six states. Kentucky was impacted the most, with more than 70 people reported dead. Homes and businesses were destroyed, including a candle factory in Mayfield, Ky., where first responders are still searching for survivors. More than 330,000 people are without electricity across multiple states. The full extent of the damage is expected to become clear in the coming days. Lutheran Disaster Response is engaging with partners in the affected areas, including the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, to respond to immediate needs. Given the initial damage assessments, recovery will likely take years, and Lutheran Disaster Response is prepared to accompany survivors until the response is complete.

What you can do:

Pray: Please pray for the people who were impacted by the destructive tornadoes. May God's healing presence give them peace and hope in their time of need. Pray that God will deliver comfort to those who mourn the loss of loved ones and strength to those who are working diligently to care for affected communities.

Give: Gifts to "[U.S. tornadoes](#)" will be used entirely (100%) to assist those affected until the response is complete.

Connect: To learn more about the situation and the ELCA's response:

- Sign up to receive Lutheran Disaster Response [alerts](#).
- Check the Lutheran Disaster Response [blog](#).
- Like Lutheran Disaster Response on [Facebook](#) and follow @ELCALDR on [Twitter](#).

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

We lift up prayers of thanksgiving for:

- The birth of Walker Harrison Desai on 12/16. (Walker is the son of Cory and Josh Desai and the grandson of Beth and Rick Walker)

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

- Iona Jones who died on 12/11

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Bill Stolze (brother of Bob Stolze) who is hospitalized
- Jim Blum (brother of Phyllis Stock) scheduled for cancer surgery on 12/22
- Robin Panko recovering from a recent surgical procedure
- 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!

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/>

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 Bells

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.

Calendar for January 2 – January 9

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

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

Monday, 1/3

7:00 pm 100th
Anniversary Planning
Meeting

Tuesday, 1/4

Wednesday, 1/5

8:00 am Men's Breakfast
at The Landmark
Restaurant
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
7:30 pm Chancel Choir

Thursday, 1/6

6:30 pm Officers
([Join](#) via Zoom
– ID 814 2532 5342)
7:00 pm BLC Quilters

Friday, 1/7

Pastor's Sabbath

2:30 pm Dulcimer
Group Rehearsal

Saturday, 1/8

9:00 am Holiday
un-decorating
9:15 am Property
Committee

Sunday, 1/9

100th Anniversary Sunday

8:55 am Worship with
Communion with guest
Pastor Lori Nickoloff
(in-person
and livestream) with
reception following
10:15 am Faith
Formation for All
12:30 pm 2nd Sunday
Dinner Ministry
(delivery only)

Pastor Amy remains on scheduled time away and will return to the office on January 5. Please contact Pastor Hoffman directly for pastoral care, if needed.

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.

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