

Life
does not consist
in the abundance
of possessions

LUKE 12:15

Sunday, July 31, 2022
8th Sunday after Pentecost



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
 Raelynn Clare, Music Director
 Dr. Jim Jefferis, Chancel Choir Director

Sunday, July 31, 2022 ~ 8th Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude:

We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder
 (Theme and Variations)

Afro-American Spiritual
 setting by Gordon Young

Today's texts offer instruction and encouragement for all who are occasionally overwhelmed by the "unhappy business" of life. Jesus urges us to take care and be on guard against all kinds of greed. We who have died with Christ in holy baptism have also been raised with him and are encouraged to elevate our thinking, seeking the "things that are above." To that end we seek the sustenance of the Lord's supper and the encouragement of God's word.

GATHERING

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| GATHERING HYMN | Glorious Things of You Are Spoken | ELW 647 |
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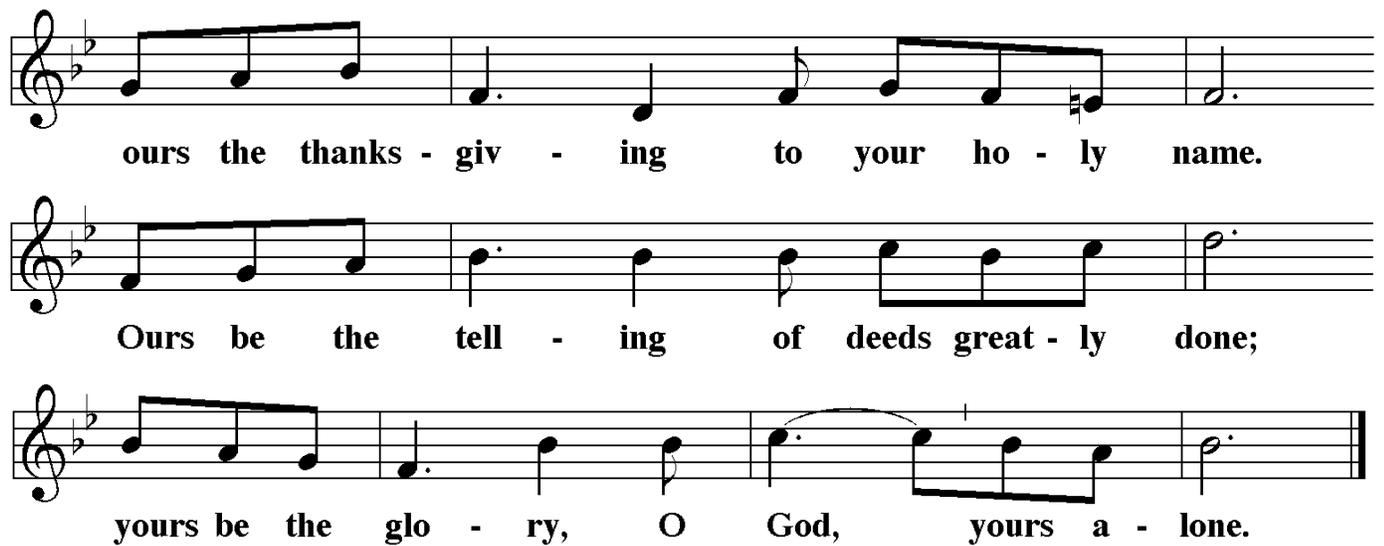
GREETING

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.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
 yours the a - noint - ing, the ra - di - ant worth.
 Ours the re - joic - ing for spir - its a - flame;



ours the thanks - giv - ing to your ho - ly name.

Ours be the tell - ing of deeds great - ly done;

yours be the glo - ry, O God, yours a - lone.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Benevolent God, you are the source, the guide, and the goal of our lives. Teach us to love what is worth loving, to reject what is offensive to you, and to treasure what is precious in your sight, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

PSALM: Psalm 49:1-12

¹Hear this, all you peoples;
give ear, all inhabitants of the world,

²both low and high,
rich and poor together.

³My mouth shall speak wisdom;
the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.

⁴I will incline my ear to a proverb;
I will solve my riddle to the music of the harp.

⁵Why should I fear in times of trouble,
when the iniquity of my persecutors surrounds me,

⁶those who trust in their wealth
and boast of the abundance of their riches?

⁷Truly, no ransom avails for one's life,
there is no price one can give to God for it.

⁸For the ransom of life is costly,
and can never suffice,

⁹that one should live on forever
and never see the grave.

¹⁰When we look at the wise, they die;
fool and dolt perish together
and leave their wealth to others.

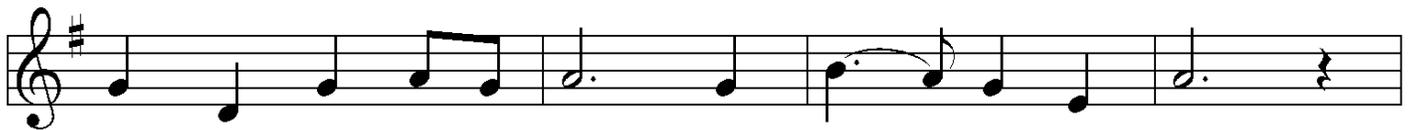
¹¹Their graves are their homes forever,
their dwelling places to all generations,
though they named lands their own.

¹²Mortals cannot abide in their pomp;
they are like the animals that perish.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Word of life, Je- sus Christ, all glo - ry to you!



Word of life, Je- sus Christ, all praise to you!



Our hearts burn with - in us while you o - pen to us the Scrip - tures.



Word of life, Je- sus Christ, all glo - ry to you!



Word of life, Je- sus Christ, all praise to you!

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Luke 12:13-21

In God's reign, the "rich will be sent away empty." Jesus uses a parable to warn against identifying the worth of one's life with the value of one's possessions rather than one's relationship with God.

¹³Someone in the crowd said to [Jesus,] "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." ¹⁴But he said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" ¹⁵And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." ¹⁶Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. ¹⁷And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' ¹⁸Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' ²⁰But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' ²¹So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

ELW 678

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

In Christ, you have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

We believe in him and are marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord.

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit

born of the virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried;

he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;

he ascended into heaven,

he is seated at the right hand of the Father.

and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen**

God has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Therefore, let us be reconciled to God and to one another.

Silence for reflection.

Merciful God,
we confess that we have not followed your path but have chosen our own way. Instead of putting others before ourselves, we long to take the best seats at the table. When met by those in need, we have too often passed by on the other side. Set us again on the path of life. Save us from ourselves and free us to love our neighbors. Amen.

Hear the good news! God does not deal with us according to our sins but delights in granting pardon and mercy. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. You are free to love as God loves.

Amen.

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Share the peace in a way that cares for friend and neighbor.

If you worship virtually, share the peace through the comments section or text.

| |
|---|
| <p>**Please remain standing.**</p> |
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THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Our prayers are always offered on behalf of the whole community.

United in Christ and guided by the Spirit, we pray for the church, the creation, and all in need.

A brief silence.

#1 O God, you are wholeness. Where there is division in your church, bring reconciliation and healing. Guide the work of theologians, Sunday school teachers, seminary professors, and all who provide instruction for the building up of your church. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#2 O God, you are the source of all life. Where creation cries out in distress, bring relief and renewal. Bless farmers, ranchers, distributors, and all who provide our food. Nourish the land and all its habitants. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#3 O God, you are wisdom. Where nations and communities yearn for peace, bring justice. Strengthen those who toil for the welfare of others, especially military personnel, police, first responders, and activists, and for the healing of the nations. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, you make all things new. Strengthen and renew the relationships we share with these members and friends of Bethlehem and their families: Abigail & Kevin (Isabel, Madeleine, Micah, Nathaniel); Anne & Dan (Catherine), David; Fran; and Andrew & Karalyn (Alexander, Charlotte, Eleanor, William). Bring new life and growth to the ministry of our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Breathe new life into those struggling in body, mind, or spirit:

We lift up prayers of thanksgiving for:

- the safe delivery and birth of Henderson Matthew, son of Laura and grandson of Mark and Cathy

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

- James (former member) who died July 13

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Howard as he recovers from anticipated surgery
- Wayne as he recovers from hip replacement surgery
- Lavonne, mother of Jeff Pries who is hospitalized with heart and lung problems

- Lee, who has transferred to care at St. John's Home
- Those who are caregivers for loved ones
- Those who are ill from Coronavirus and all who care for them

We also remember those we lift before you, silently and aloud...

Silence for individual prayer.

God of grace,
hear our prayer.

God of every time and place, in Jesus' name and filled with your Holy Spirit, we entrust these spoken prayers and those in our hearts into your holy keeping.

Amen.

SHARING GOD'S MEAL

OFFERING

Information about supporting Bethlehem's ministry with your offerings is available in the Welcome insert in your pew rack or by visiting blcfairport.org/support-our-ministry.

OFFERING OF MUSIC

The Love of God

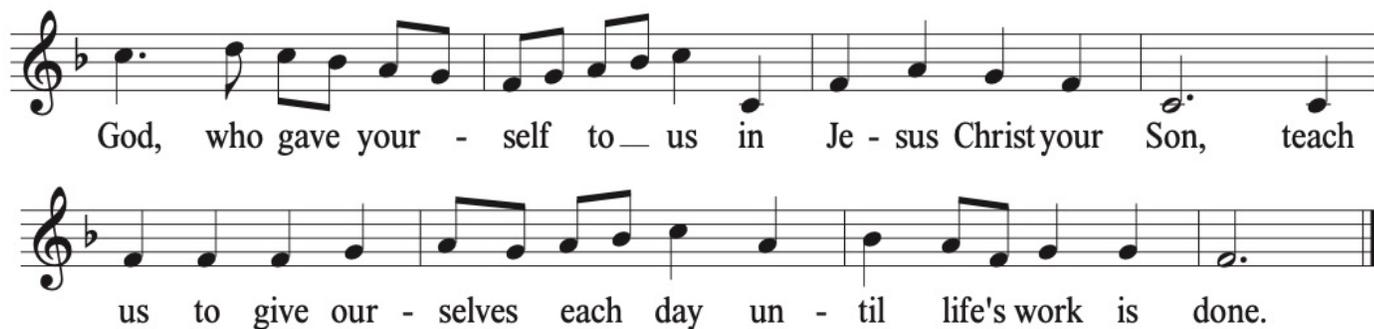
words and music by
Frederick Martin Lehman
and Claudia Lehman Mays
arr. Sara Groves

Duet: Donna Berner and James Berner

Guitar: James Berner

OFFERTORY

In grat - i - tude and hum - ble trust we bring our best to - day to
serve your cause and share your love with all a - long life's way. O__



God, who gave your - self to us in Je - sus Christ your Son, teach
us to give our - selves each day un - til life's work is done.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. God of abundance:

you have set before us a plentiful harvest. As we feast on your goodness, strengthen us to labor in your field, and equip us to bear fruit for the good of all, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, we pray as you 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

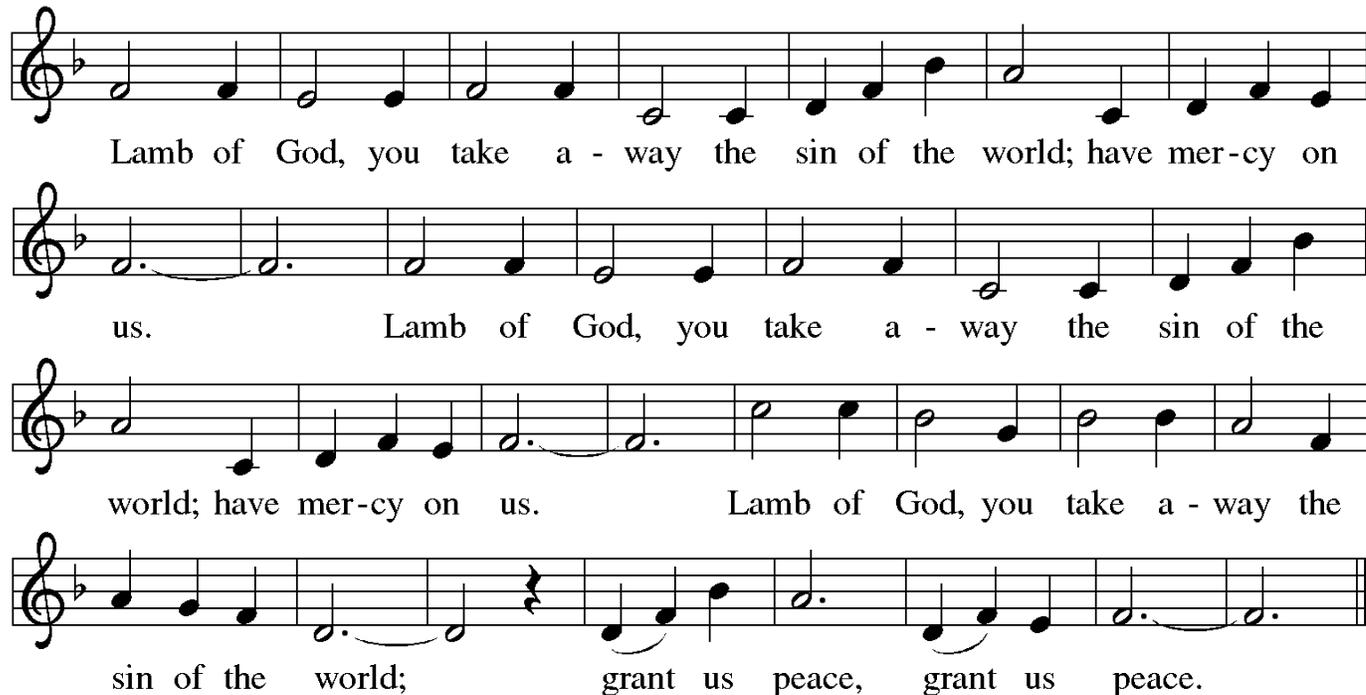
In Christ's presence there is fullness of joy. Come to the banquet.

Thanks be to God.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

Our communion bread is gluten-free, unless noted by the pastor. Grape juice is available; indicate your need to the communion assistant. If you worship through the Livestream and wish to receive communion, please reach out to one of the pastors.

THE COMMUNION



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS

God Extends an Invitation

ELW 486

Be Thou My Vision

ELW 793

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Life-giving God, through this meal you have bandaged our wounds and fed us with your mercy. Now send us forth to live for others, both friend and stranger, that all may come to know your love. This we pray in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

LEAVING TO SERVE

SENDING HYMN

God of Grace and God of Glory

ELW 705

BENEDICTION

The God of peace, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you, comfort you, and show you the path of life this day and always.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Love your neighbor.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Finale

Robert W. Jones

(from *Sonatina for Worship No. 5*)

Thank you to all those who participated in worship this Sunday! Want to learn more about what roles are needed in worship or sign-up for a pre-scheduled role? Fill out the survey on the table in the narthex and place it in the basket or speak with a pastor.

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.

What's happening at BLC this week? Visit the Calendar of Events at www.blcfairport.org. Zoom links for virtual meetings are also found there. If you would like to schedule a meeting or event, please email the church office at office@blcfairport.org or visit <https://blcfairport.org/blc-facility-request/>

Church office hours: Thank you for your patience during this transition without office support staff. Our co-Pastors are available Sunday-Thursday and on-call for emergencies. Contact them directly to schedule an appointment either by calling (585)223-0634 or emailing pastor.hoffman@blcfairport.org or pastor.amy@blcfairport.org

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Dying to be Rich

“All is vanity and a chasing after wind,” says Ecclesiastes, yet we chase wealth like it will last forever, forgetting that we ourselves will one day die and that everything we have stored up here will be useless to us. Into the tragedy of our human drive to be rich in possessions, even at the cost of being poor in everything else, Jesus tells the parable of the rich fool. It is first told to brothers squabbling over an inheritance, and now it is told to us, some of us squabbling with our relatives or neighbors over wealth and possessions. The rich fool, despite his great wealth, is poor in every other way, eating alone, and even dying alone. In Jesus’ depiction of this fool our own sinful hearts are exposed. We too vainly chase after even more, sacrificing right relationship with God and neighbor in the process. Death comes to the rich fool when he least expects it, as it must come to all of us. How, then, are we to be “rich toward God”? Paul reminds the Colossian Christians of their own unexpected deaths in the waters of baptism: “you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” In baptism we are joined to Christ’s death, and we are to be dead to all foolish chasing after more possessions. We have died, not alone, but with Christ. Our lives now are hidden with Christ in God, and in Christ we share a fortune of true riches that also are good for our neighbors. Death will come, but our treasure is already secure. By faith we have acquired abounding riches above, and by faith we are freed from storing up treasures for ourselves here on earth.