

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel
Sunday, December 18, 2022*



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

Sunday, December 18, 2022 ~ *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

Announcements

Call to Worship
Prepare Ye the Way

CATAD AL SEÑOR
arr. Hal H. Hopson

BLC Children's Choir
assisted by Glenda Lockard, piano

For centuries, Christians have sung O Come, O Come Emanuel and lifted up the titles for the Messiah that are named in scripture. Today's readings point to Messiah – Emmanuel – God with us.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Come, Lord Jesus.

On this day and in this place, be our guest.

Now is the time to wake from sleep.

And confront our sins, confessing them to God who is merciful and just.

Silence for reflection

God for whom we wait,

We confess that we have grown complacent with the world as it is and lost a vision for how you created it to be. We fail to see you in the face of our neighbor. We settle for false prophets instead of waiting for the Son of God. Come to us with forgiveness and mercy.

People of God, a new thing is growing in our midst. By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder. You have put on ☩ Christ, and your sins are washed away. Rejoice in the way of the Lord.

Amen

GREETING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Eternal God, you do not abandon us in exile but hear our plea for returning and rest: Visit us we pray with your presence and raise us to greet with hope and joy the promised day of salvation; through Jesus Christ, who with you and Holy Spirit, lives and reigns now and forever.

Amen.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

The Advent wreath will be lit as we sing O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

ELW 257

st. 1

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

PRAYER FOR LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Messiah, Emmanuel, come and dwell with us.

Jesus everybody's waiting for you – in Fairport and in Rochester, in local shops and county seats, in schools and stores, in workplaces and homes, people all over the world are waiting for you. O Come, Lord Jesus.

Amen.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

DISMISSAL TO WORSHIP FOR KIDS

All kids ages 3 through elementary are welcome to a special time of hearing the Word, conversation and activity! Parents can remain in the sanctuary while the kids gather in the room across the hall from the side entrance to the sanctuary. Kids will return during the offering so they can participate in Communion.

READING: Romans 1:1-7

Most of the Christians in Rome do not know Paul. In this letter's opening he introduces himself as an apostle divinely appointed to spread God's gospel. The gospel's content is the promised coming of Christ, and Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations, including his Roman audience.

¹Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ²which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25

Matthew's story of Jesus' birth focuses on the role of Joseph, who adopts the divinely-begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means "God saves."

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us."²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY	Of the Father's Love Begotten	ELW 295
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THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

A brief silence.

#1 God our shepherd, let your Spirit move with power throughout the church. Give discernment and wisdom to our bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders. Take away our fear, so that we serve and love, confident that you are guiding us.

Emmanuel,

Hear us, we pray.

#2 God our source, awaken us to the beauty of the earth and the marvelous variety of life. Unite humankind in repairing and caring for your creation. Protect creatures and habitats in peril due to rising seas and warming temperatures. Emmanuel,
Hear us, we pray.

#3 God our vision, raise up leaders in every nation who dream of freedom and justice for all people. We pray for the work of international organizations that promote peace and human rights. Emmanuel,
Hear us, we pray.

Come, Lord Jesus to neighbors far and near. We pray for these members and friends of Bethlehem and their families: Fred & Rory, Carol, Dale & Ginny, Lori, and Howard & Janet. Be with our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe as they receive your presence in new ways. Emmanuel,
Hear us, we pray.

Come, Lord Jesus, to all in need of your hope and healing.

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Ed C., father of Sandy G.'s daughter-in-law, recovering from lung transplant surgery
- George G., brother of Toni T., who is in stage 4 kidney failure and will be facing dialysis soon
- Jeanine K., sister of Susie D., who was diagnosed with cancer
- Jerry, friend of Kathy M., who is recovering from valve replacement on December 2
- 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.

Emmanuel,
Hear us, we pray.

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

SHARING GOD'S MEAL

THE PEACE

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.

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

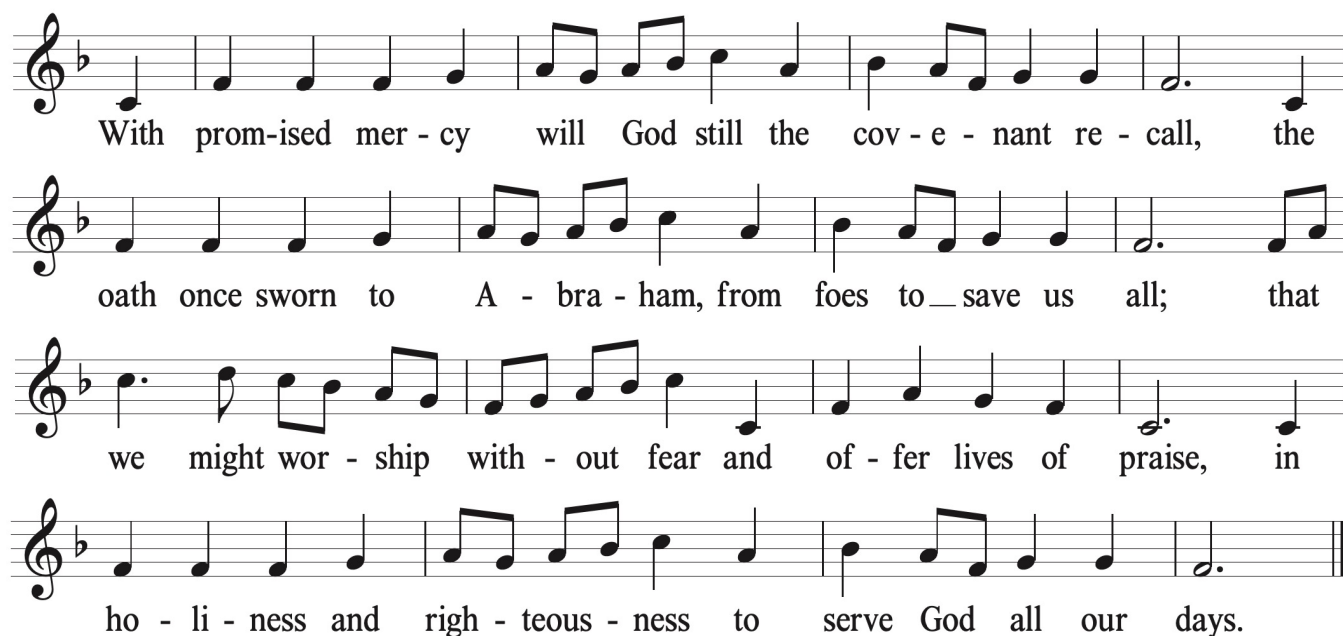
Carol for the Newborn King

words, Ben Jonson
music, John Leavitt

The Chancel Choir

assisted by Katherine Jefferis, mezzo-soprano

OFFERTORY



With prom-ised mer - cy will God still the cov - e - nant re - call, the
oath once sworn to A - bra - ham, from foes to save us all; that
we might wor - ship with - out fear and of - fer lives of praise, in
ho - li - ness and righ - teous - ness to serve God all our days.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

We pray. Holy One,
we wait in hope. And we give with hope. Hope for your coming reign; hope because you are present with us even now. Receive these generous offerings, and use them for your work of healing and hope in the world. Amen.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Spirit and the church cry out:
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.
All those who await his appearance pray:
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.
The whole creation pleads:
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Lord Jesus,
open our hearts to believe that you come in this meal of grace. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

One in body, one in Spirit, we pray:
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

Be strong, do not fear. Here is your God who has come to save you.

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

Je - sus, Lamb of God, have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, bear - er of our sins, have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, re - deem - er, re - deem - er of the world,

grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS

Savior of the Nations, Come

ELW 263

He Came Down

ELW 253

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



My soul pro-claims your great-ness, Lord; I sing my Sav-ior's praise! You
looked up - on my low - li - ness, and I am full of grace. Now
ev - 'ry land and ev - 'ry age this bless - ing shall pro - claim great
won - ders you have done for me, and ho - ly is your name.

LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus for whom we wait.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN	Hark, the Glad Sound	ELW 239
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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Wait for the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Jakaż to gwiazda błyszczy na wschodzie
(Oh, What Kind of Star Shines in the East)

Polish carol
setting, Stefan Surzyński

BLC Musicians

Raelynn Clare, Music Director and Organist

Dr. Jim Jefferis, Director of The Chancel Choir

Rich Towsley, Director of The Folk Group and BLC Dulcimers

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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Prayer of the Day is from *What Are We Waiting For* by William H. Petersen
Offertory Prayer – by Rev. Joanna Harader from SpaciousFaith.com

A Meaning-Making Name

Names are powerful makers of meaning both in the scriptures and in our lives. Consider how much we associate people with their names. A name is merely a word, a sound, yet it can completely represent a person. And our names can be powerful. Think about the resurrection account in John 20 when a distraught Mary Magdalene does not recognize Jesus in the garden. She does not recognize him until when? He speaks her name.

The texts for the fourth Sunday of Advent invite us to explore the name “Emmanuel.” “Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel” (Isa. 7:14). And he shall be called “Emmanuel,” *God with us*. This reality changes everything. Never is God so *with us* as in Jesus of Nazareth. Here is God-made-flesh, and in his very name, the Son of God proclaims just how *with us* and *for us* God really is. This fulfillment of prophetic promise offers us a delicate and dramatic reality: God has slipped into skin and walks among us in a totally new way, offering us life and salvation.