



Sunday, January 8, 2023
Epiphany of Our Lord



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, January 8, 2023 ~ *Epiphany of Our Lord*

Prelude

Prelude: Pastoral

Anonymous 1700

Chrisanne Gates, guest organist/pianist

Announcements

The feast of Epiphany (“manifestation”) concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God’s glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah and Ephesians, that glory is proclaimed for all nations and people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God’s love to all people.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who shines in glory, clothes us in compassion, and bears gifts of mercy for all.

Amen.

Let us confess our sins with confidence in God’s promise of forgiveness.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God, wonderful counselor,

we confess that we have turned from your gifts and chosen our own way. We have not made room for you in our hearts or in our world. We have lived in fear; we have not welcomed the stranger; we desire gifts that will not endure. Forgive us our sins, known and unknown, and open us to receive the peace of Jesus dwelling in and among us. Amen.

God's loving kindness has appeared to us in Christ our Savior. We are saved, not by anything we have done, but by God's mercy poured out on us richly. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Through the Spirit living in you, God give you faith to trust Jesus, who is Love born for you, now and always.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Hail to the Lord's Anointed

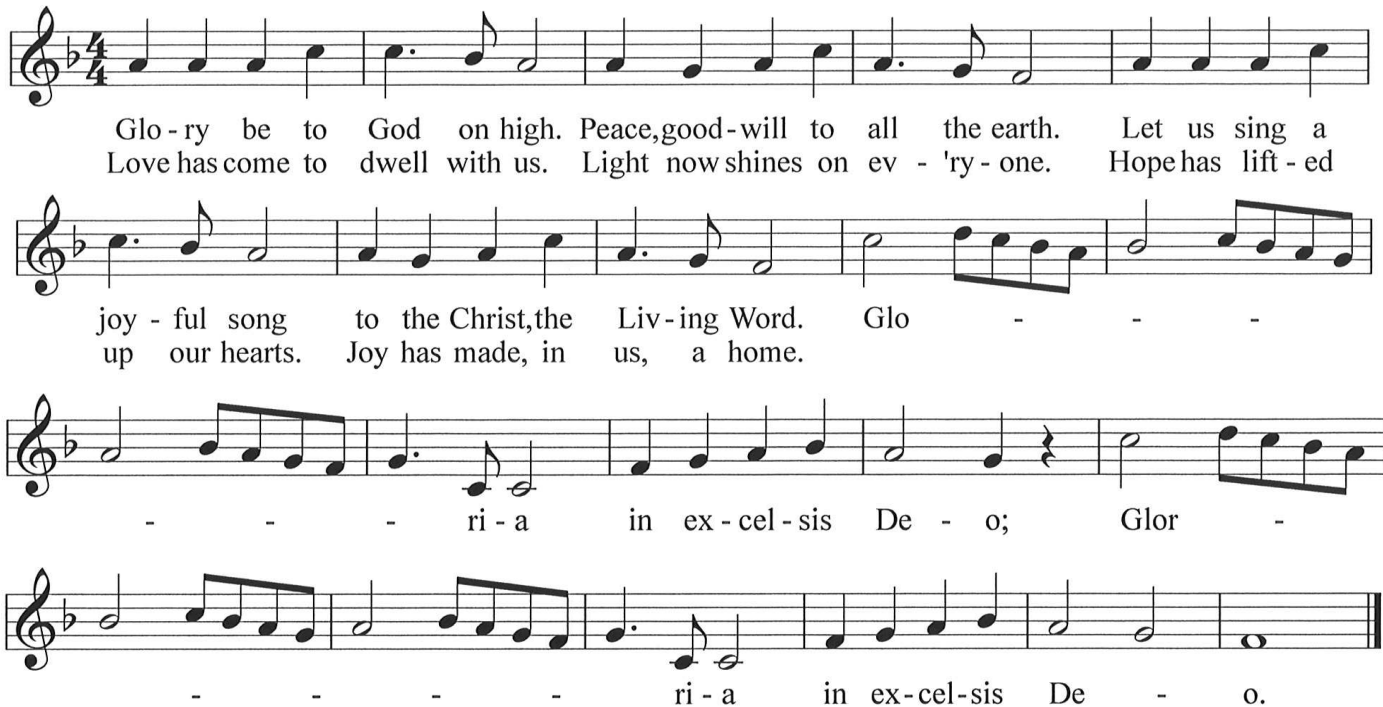
ELW 311

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 be to God on high. Peace, good-will to all the earth. Let us sing a
Love has come to dwell with us. Light now shines on ev - 'ry - one. Hope has lift - ed

joy - ful song to the Christ, the Liv - ing Word. Glo - - -
up our hearts. Joy has made, in us, a home.

- - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o; Glor -

- - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

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: Ephesians 3:1-12

What had been hidden from previous generations is now made known through the gospel ministry of Paul and others. In Christ both Jews and Gentiles participate in the richness of God's promised salvation.

¹This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—²for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, ³and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: ⁶that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. ⁸Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; ¹⁰so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him. 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



The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 2:1-12

God's promise shines bright in the night as magi follow a star to honor a new king. Strangers from a faraway land, they welcome the long-awaited messiah of Israel.

¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶"And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.' "

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Choir: st. 1

All: sts. 2, 3, 4


Jesus, the Light of the World



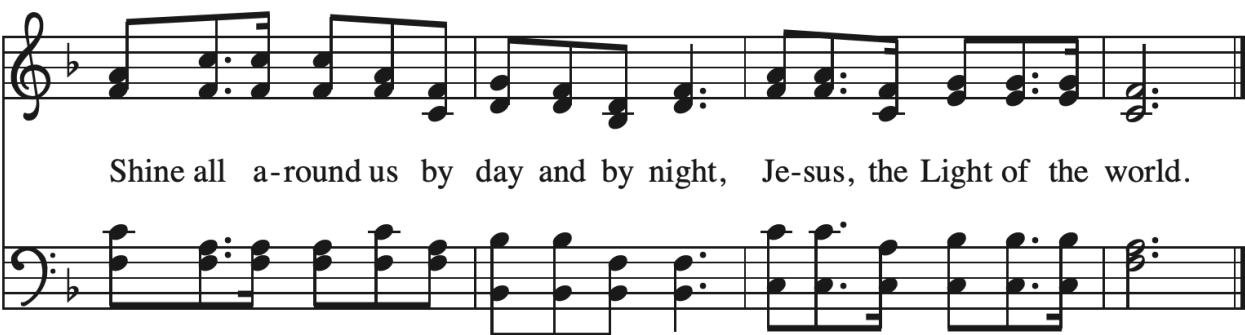
1 Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, Je-sus, the Light of the world;
2 Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; Je-sus, the Light of the world;
3 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Je-sus, the Light of the world;
4 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Je-sus, the Light of the world;



"Glo - ry to the new-born king," Je-sus, the Light of the world.
join the tri - umph of the skies; Je-sus, the Light of the world.
Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord! Je-sus, the Light of the world.
Hail the Sun of righ-teous-ness! Je-sus, the Light of the world.

Refrain

We'll walk in the light, beau-ti-ful light, come where the dew-drops of mer-cy are bright.



Shine all a-round us by day and by night, Je-sus, the Light of the world.

NICENE CREED

We confess our faith:

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

With wonder and thanksgiving for Christ's coming into the world, we pray for the church, the life of the earth, and the whole human family.

A brief silence.

#1 Guide the whole church with your wisdom, revealing God. Nurture ecumenical and interreligious understanding around the globe. Accompany the ministries of this congregation in the coming year. Inspire those who lead worship, teach, visit, pray, administer, and serve. Keep us mindful of the needs of others in our communities and neighborhoods. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#2 Restore your glory to the earth, creating God. Protect fragile ecosystems: rain forests, coral reefs, wetlands, prairies, and shorelines. Guide us to treasure the rich variety of animals and plants that share the world with us, especially those that are endangered. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#3 Bring the nations into the way of justice and peace, righteous God. Strengthen those who work for human rights, equality, and the protection of the most vulnerable. We pray for all in public office, that they may serve with honesty and honor. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Make your presence known to neighbors far and near, incarnate God. We pray for these members and friends of Bethlehem and their families: Erwin & Nancy, Colleen & Fred (Corinne, Evan), Connie & Tom, Mary, and Jackie. Be with our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Fill the world with your comfort and healing, compassionate God. We pray especially for those whose needs are known to us:

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

- Jeanine K. sister of Susie D., who died on 12/19

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Tim M., husband of Linda M., who was taken to the hospital after a fall
- Taylor, niece of Kathy M., who has been diagnosed with cancer
- George and Nancy F., both being treated for Covid-19 at home
- Those who are caregivers for loved ones
- Those who are ill from Coronavirus and all who care for them

We pray for those we name before you.

Silence for individual prayer.

We pray also for those whose needs are known only to you. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh in Christ Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God.

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

Circle of Praise

words and music, Pepper Choplin

The Chancel Choir

Lord of light, your name outshining
All the stars and suns of space,
Use our talents in your kingdom
As the servants of your grace;
Use us to fulfill your purpose
In the gift of Christ your Son.
Father, as in highest heaven,
So on earth your will be done.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Holy God,
your beauty shines forth from the manger and your love flows from the cross.
As you gather us around these signs of your love come among us, warm us to
extend your care among the hungry and all in need. In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Now we do as Jesus did.
We take this bread and wine, the produce of earth and fruit of human labor.
In these, Jesus has promised to be present;
through these, Christ feeds us.
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

Come and taste the joy of God!

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



- 1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
- 2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
- 3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

COMMUNION HYMNS

The First Noel

Jesus, Come! For We Invite You

ELW 300

ELW 312

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



1 O Lord, now let your ser - vant de - part in heav'n-ly peace,
for I have seen the glo - ry of your re - deem - ing grace:
a light to lead the na - tions un - to your ho - ly hill,
the glo - ry of your peo - ple, your cho - sen Is - ra - el.

LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

God the Creator who delights in you, Jesus the Savior who is born for you, and the lifegiving Spirit who shines on you, ✠ bless you and keep you in hope and peace.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Bright and Glorious Is the Sky

ELW 301

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the joy of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

David Cherwien

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 Chris Gates for serving as our guest organist for today's service.

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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Jesus, The Light of the World - Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, stanzas; George D. Elderkin, 1845-1928,
refrain Music: WE'LL WALK IN THE LIGHT, Traditional; arr. George D. Elderkin

Treasured by God

A newborn baby often elicits “oohs” and “ahs” from its admirers and yet developmentally, may be doing nothing incredibly remarkable—only able to focus on objects only about 18 inches in front of its face and prone to stare at any shiny object. Nevertheless, a newborn is a miracle to behold, filled with wonder for the world around it and desiring nothing more than to be fed, held, rocked, nurtured, and loved.

The gifts of the magi direct us away from the cute, cuddly, cooing baby Jesus by pointing us to who Jesus really has come to be. The magi offer gold, a possession of kings; frankincense, used in ritual to indicate the presence of the deity; and myrrh, an oil used at the time of death as well as for anointing priests. By their gifts, the wise men reveal the identity of this child: the king before whom nations will bow, the anointed high priest of God, and the suffering servant who will die for the ones he has come to serve.

The “oohs” and “ahs” we offer as we celebrate the Epiphany of Our Lord are not simply for a cooing and cuddly baby Jesus but for a God who chooses to reveal God’s love and mercy by taking human form. On this day, we celebrate that God’s mercy is wider and deeper than we imagined and includes all people and all nations. All people—rich or poor, Gentile or Jew, straight or gay, male or female—are God’s treasure, the precious ones for whom God is willing to die. What do we bring to honor our Lord before whom we bow? We bring the treasure of our lives poured out in praise of God and in service to others.