

*Sunday, February 5, 2023*  
*Fifth Sunday after Epiphany*



# BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

48 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY ~ (585) 223-0634 ~ [www.blcfairport.org](http://www.blcfairport.org)  
The Rev. Abigail Zang Hoffman and The Rev. Amy Walter-Peterson, co-Pastors

**Sunday, February 5, 2023 ~ *Fifth Sunday after Epiphany***

Prelude

When We Are Living

*SOMOS DEL SEÑOR*  
setting, Emma Lou Diemer

Announcements

*Light shines in the darkness for the upright, the psalmist sings. Isaiah declares that when we loose the bonds of injustice and share our bread with the hungry, the light breaks forth like the dawn. In another passage from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, the light of the world, calls his followers to let the light of their good works shine before others. Through baptism we are sent into the world to shine with the light of Christ.*

## **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 makes all things new, whose mercy endures forever.

**Amen.**

Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy One, source of our renewal,

**we confess that we are wrapped up in sin, and cannot free ourselves. We have not practiced your righteousness. Our hearts have turned away from you. For the sake of the world you so love, forgive us, that we may be reconciled to one another for the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

Thus says our God: “The former things have come to pass and new things I now declare.” God’s mercy makes us new. We are forgiven in the name of † Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

God, Whose Almighty Sword

ELW 673

### 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 God in the high-est, and peace to God’s peo-ple on earth.



Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa-ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.



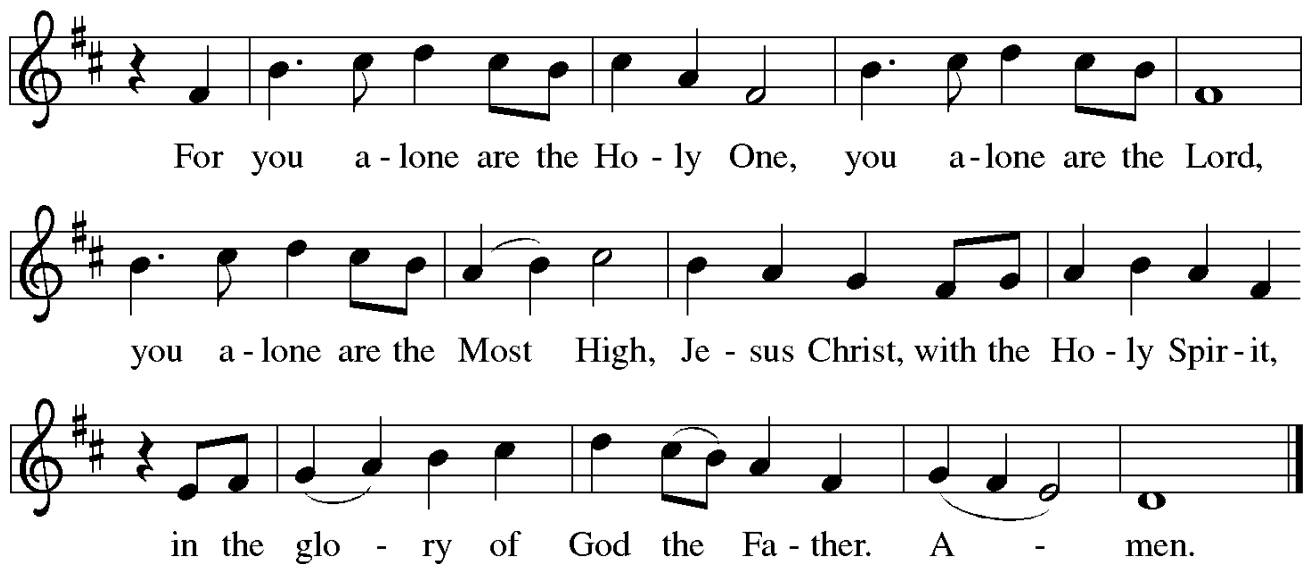
Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-ceive our prayer.



### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Lord God, with endless mercy you receive the prayers of all who call upon you. By your Spirit show us the things we ought to do, and give us the grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**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: Isaiah 58:1-9a [9b-12]

*Shortly after the return of Israel from exile in Babylon, the people were troubled by the ineffectiveness of their fasts. God reminds them that outward observance is no substitute for genuine fasting that results in acts of justice, such as feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, and clothing the naked.*

<sup>1</sup>Shout out, do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion,  
 to the house of Jacob their sins.

<sup>2</sup>Yet day after day they seek me  
 and delight to know my ways,  
 as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness  
 and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;

they ask of me righteous judgments,  
they delight to draw near to God.

<sup>3</sup>“Why do we fast, but you do not see?

Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”

Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day,  
and oppress all your workers.

<sup>4</sup>Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight  
and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today  
will not make your voice heard on high.

<sup>5</sup>Is such the fast that I choose,  
a day to humble oneself?

Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,  
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Will you call this a fast,  
a day acceptable to the Lord?

<sup>6</sup>Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?

<sup>7</sup>Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them,  
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

<sup>8</sup>Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator shall go before you,  
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

<sup>9a</sup>Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;  
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

<sup>9b</sup>If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

<sup>10</sup>if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.

<sup>11</sup>The Lord will guide you continually,  
and satisfy your needs in parched places,  
and make your bones strong;

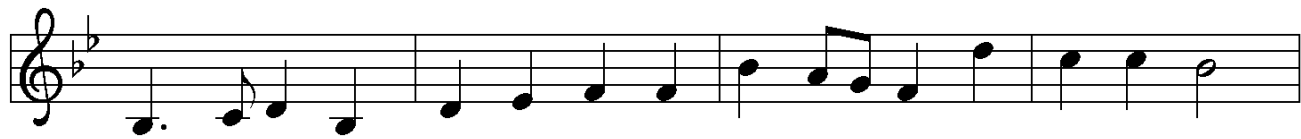
and you shall be like a watered garden,  
like a spring of water,  
whose waters never fail.

<sup>12</sup>Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;  
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;  
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,  
the restorer of streets to live in.

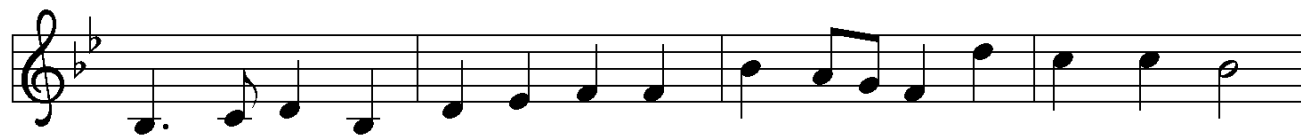
The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: Matthew 5:13-20

*In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus encourages his followers to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, doing good works and keeping God's commandments.*

[Jesus said:] <sup>13</sup>"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

<sup>14</sup>"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. <sup>15</sup>No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

<sup>17</sup>"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup>For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is

accomplished. <sup>19</sup>Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup>For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON


*assisted by The Folk Group*Stanzas 1 and *Refrain*: The Folk Group (as Cantors)

2, 3, 4: Cantors begin each phrase – responded by All

*Refrain*: All

## Bring Forth the Kingdom

*Cantor:*



1. You are salt for the earth, O peo - ple:  
 2. You are a light on the hill, O peo - ple:  
 3. You are a seed of the Word, O peo - ple:  
 4. We are a blest and a pil - grim peo - ple:

*All:* *Cantor:*



Salt for the King-dom of God! Share the fla - vor of  
 Light for the Cit - y of God! Shine so ho - ly and  
 Bring forth the King-dom of God! Seeds of mer - cy and  
 Bound for the King-dom of God! Love our jour - ney and

*All:*



life, O peo - ple: Life in the King-dom of God!  
 bright, O peo - ple: Shine for the King-dom of God!  
 seeds of jus - tice, Grow in the King-dom of God!  
 love our home - land: Love is the King-dom of God!

*Refrain*


Bring forth the King-dom of mer - cy, Bring forth the



King-dom of peace; Bring forth the King-dom of jus - tice,



Bring forth the Cit - y of God!

## THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

#1 Call your people to seek your wisdom in difficult conversations and action. Give the church everywhere courage to repent for the ways we have tolerated and practiced injustice in all disciplines of human life. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

#2 Loosen the bonds of injustice in our midst. Grant peace to endless quarrels, put an end to hunger, and break every yoke of oppression. Shelter all who flee abuse in their homes or violence in their communities. Satisfy those afflicted in any way. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

#3 Shape our congregation to be salt for the earth. Give us delight in your commandments, that we are generous with those in need. Open our doors and resources to the world and those who are lost from their heritages, homes and security for their families. Make us steadfast in our trust in you, ready with tangible mercy and compassion for our neighbors. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

We follow you in sharing love and care in our world. We pray for these members and friends of Bethlehem and their families: Don & Vicki, Neil, Art, Jenny, Beth & Rick, Amy & Hans. Be with our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe as they follow where you lead. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Seek out those who are struggling in body, mind or spirit. Provide for those in any need.

*We lift up prayers of thanksgiving for:*  
the safe delivery and birth of Emersyn Rose G. on 1/19, daughter of Brian and AJ G., granddaughter of Sandy G., niece of Carol S.

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

- Steve H., father of Kevin H., father-in-law of Pastor H., and Papa to Maddie, Izzy, Nate and Micah, who died on 1/27
- Bob L., who died on 1/20

*We pray for those in need of healing, especially:*

- Mark F., who is recovering from surgery
- Andy G., who is recovering from surgery
- 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.*

Hear also these concerns we raise in our hearts or on our voice. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

We bring to you our needs and hopes, O God, trusting your wisdom and power revealed in Christ crucified.

**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](http://blcfairport.org/support-our-ministry).*

OFFERING OF MUSIC

He Never Failed Me Yet

Robert Ray

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. Liberating God,  
**you break the bonds of injustice and let the oppressed go free. Receive these offerings in thanksgiving for all your works of merciful power, and shape us as people of your justice and freedom. You we magnify and adore, through Jesus our Savior, Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Friends, we come to the table  
**Where God intends us to be nourished.**  
So come, you who hunger and thirst  
**For a deeper faith, a better life, a fairer world.**  
Jesus Christ, who is present at our tables,  
**Now invites us to be guests at his.**

## 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

Come to the Table

ELW 481

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service

ELW 712

This Little Light of Mine

ELW 677

#### TABLE BLESSING

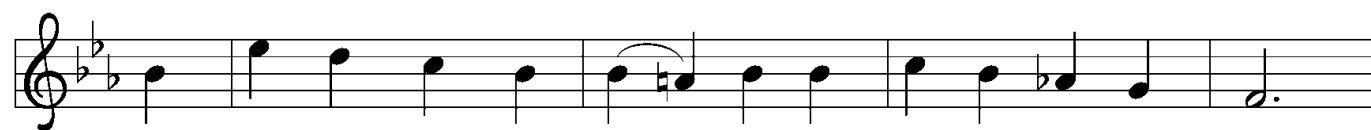
#### POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



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

The God who faithfully brings forth justice ✠ bless, strengthen, and uphold you,  
today and always.

**Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.

**Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

Let Us with a Gladsome Mind

*MONKLAND*  
setting, Albert L. Travis

## 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

**Welcome to our guest preacher, The Rev. Eric C. Shafer!** He is a pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service's "Pastor-in-Residence." He retired on July 31 after more than eight years as Senior Pastor at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in Santa Monica, California. There he helped open the Students4Students Shelter at Mt. Olive, the first shelter for homeless college students in the USA. His previous positions include Senior Vice President for Odyssey Networks in New York City, Director of Communion for the ELCA in Chicago, and Assistant to the Bishop in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. Shafer has taught in South Africa and Madagascar and made multiple trips to Jerusalem and the West Bank. He is the host of the YouTube program Hope Matters and now lives in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. ***Plan to stay after worship today to hear more about the ministry of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service! For those participating virtually, it will also be livestreamed!***

**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](http://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](mailto:office@blcfairport.org) or visit <https://blcfairport.org/blc-facility-request/>

**Church office hours:** 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](mailto:pastor.hoffman@blcfairport.org) or [pastor.amy@blcfairport.org](mailto:pastor.amy@blcfairport.org).

Augsburg Fortress resources are being livestreamed by permission. All rights reserved.  
From *Sundays and Seasons.com*. Copyright 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.  
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #43732.  
Permission to stream and print the music in this service obtained from OneLicense under Annual License #A-724002  
Reprinted by permission under CCLI Annual License #11159563  
New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education  
Of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America.  
Used by permission. All rights reserved.  
Hymn of the Day: Bring Forth the Kingdom  
Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950  
Tune: Maty Haugen, b. 1950  
© 1986 Gia Publications, Inc.

## **It's Time to Lighten Up!**

This is a strange time of year. The days are short, the nights are long, and even though we dream of more daylight, we walk around hoping against hope that there won't be enough sunshine produced for a rodent (okay, a groundhog!) to see its own shadow. A quick scan of today's news can be equally as bleak. It is time for a little more light in an otherwise dark and dreary time.

Enter Epiphany. The missional emphasis of this season shines like a beacon of light and hope in the dead of winter, bringing good news in the middle of this world's not-so-good news. This week God provides the mission in Isaiah—feed the hungry, care for the homeless, clothe the naked. Upon accomplishing this mission God tells the people, “Your light shall break forth like the dawn.” Paul continues his Spirit-led mission, encouraging the church in Corinth, “No eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him.” Jesus teaches his disciples, “You are the light of the world. . . . Let your light shine before others” (Matt. 5:14, 16). Through these words in Jesus' sermon, he gives followers of every day and age a mission to share the light which scatters the darkness.

Whether you are looking in the news or out the window, things may seem pretty dark and dreary at this time of year, but do not miss the light of Epiphany! We are indeed created in God's image, therefore the spark of the divine is alive in all of us. The light shines through us as we live out God's mission for our lives each day. As Epiphany continues, we should all be prepared to let our light shine and share the good news