

*Sunday, May 7, 2023  
Fifth Sunday of Easter*



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, May 7, 2023 ~ *Fifth Sunday of Easter***

**PRELUDE**

*O FILII ET FILIAE*

15th cent. French carol  
setting, Wilbur Held  
(ELW 386)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, today's gospel includes Jesus' promise that he goes to prepare a place for his followers in his Father's house. Our baptism commissions us to share Jesus' mission in the world. As 1 Peter reminds us, we are a holy people, called to proclaim the one who called us out of darkness into light. In words and deeds we bear witness to the risen Christ—our way, our truth, our life.*

**GATHERING**

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who gives us new birth and raises us to new life.

**Amen.**

The witness of scripture tells us: We have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of God, our creator, we too might walk in newness of life. (Romans 6:4)

**For if we have been united with Christ in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. (Romans 6:5)**

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, it is for the Lord that we live, and if we die, it is for the Lord that we die. (Romans 14:7-8)  
**So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord, for Christ died, rose from death, and lives again in order to be Lord of the living and of the dead.**  
(Romans 14:8-9)

Death has been swallowed up in victory. (1 Corinthians 15:54)  
**Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.** (1 Corinthians 15:57)

GATHERING HYMN	Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing	ELW 389
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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.**

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Loving God, Jesus said we come to you through him. By your grace we enter into his love, receiving his mercy, open to his healing, being built into his house, made into his royal priesthood. We are in Christ, who is in you. Bless us, and make us your people, in the name and the Spirit of Christ.

**Amen.**

#### SPECIAL MUSIC

Ring the News!

Michael Bedford

BLC Children's Choir

*assisted by Karen Bigenwald, piano*

#### **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: 1 Peter 2:2-10

*Christ is the cornerstone of God's saving work and the foundation of our lives. We are God's chosen, holy people who continuously celebrate and declare the mercy of God we experience through Jesus Christ.*

<sup>2</sup>Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation—<sup>3</sup>if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

<sup>4</sup>Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and <sup>5</sup>like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. <sup>6</sup>For it stands in scripture:

“See, I am laying in Zion a stone,  
a cornerstone chosen and precious;  
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

<sup>7</sup>To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

“The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the very head of the corner,” <sup>8</sup>and

“A stone that makes them stumble,  
and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

<sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

<sup>10</sup>Once you were not a people,  
but now you are God's people;  
once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: John 14:1-14

*On the night that he is to be arrested, Jesus shares final words with his disciples. As the one through whom God is known, he promises to go before them and act on their behalf.*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. <sup>2</sup>In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. <sup>4</sup>And you know the way to the place where I am going.” <sup>5</sup>Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” <sup>6</sup>Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. <sup>7</sup>If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

<sup>8</sup>Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” <sup>9</sup>Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? <sup>10</sup>Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. <sup>11</sup>Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. <sup>12</sup>Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. <sup>13</sup>I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup>If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We affirm our faith today drawing on the witness of scripture (John 14:1-10).

We believe in God, creator of all that is and all that is to come, in whose house are many rooms; and who prepares a place for us, so that where God is, we may be also.

We trust in Jesus, who is our way, and our truth, and our life. Through him we have seen God, who lived and worked in him.

We live by the Holy Spirit, who lives and works in us; so that we may do the works that Jesus does, and even greater works; so that God may be glorified.  
Alleluia.

## THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

#1 Sustaining God, as you spoke to your disciples through Jesus, speak to us. Give us ears to listen, hearts to respond and minds to trust the message we hear. Risen Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

#2 Creating God, you show your steadfast love through mighty waters, towering mountains, verdant fields, and arid deserts. Protect the earth's diverse habitats from the forces of pollution, erosion, extinction, and global warming. Be with those suffering from natural disasters and those who care for them. Risen Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

#3 Assuring God, you accompany your people amid uncertainty and change. Uphold people in this community who have recently moved, changed jobs or schools, retired, or are going through transitions of any kind. Lead us in your ways. Risen Lord, in your mercy,  
**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: especially Liana and Eric, married yesterday; as well as John & Patti, Dick & Susie, Emmett, Evelyn, and Jeffery & Letitia. Bring new life and growth to the ministry of our sisters and brothers in our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. Risen Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

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

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

- Rev. Rob M., former pastor and friend of Andy G., who died on 4/25
- Dana B., uncle of Mark F., who died on 4/20
- Lorraine B., friend of Ruth H.

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

- Irma B., mother of Cathy A., who is hospitalized
- Kay B., the grandmother of Eric C., who is hospitalized in the ICU
- Paul M., brother-in-law of Marcy A., who is hospitalized with a stroke
- Sandra H., wife of Jeff and Ruth H's nephew, who is recovering from surgery
- David G., son of Don and Sandy G. who has been diagnosed with cancer and will begin treatment

Hear these prayers we raise to you in our hearts or on our voice.

*Silence for individual prayer.*

Risen Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Rejoicing in the victory of Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.  
**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

All Praise to Thee

text, Martin Luther  
music, Elaine Hagenberg

The Chancel Choir

### OFFERTORY



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of

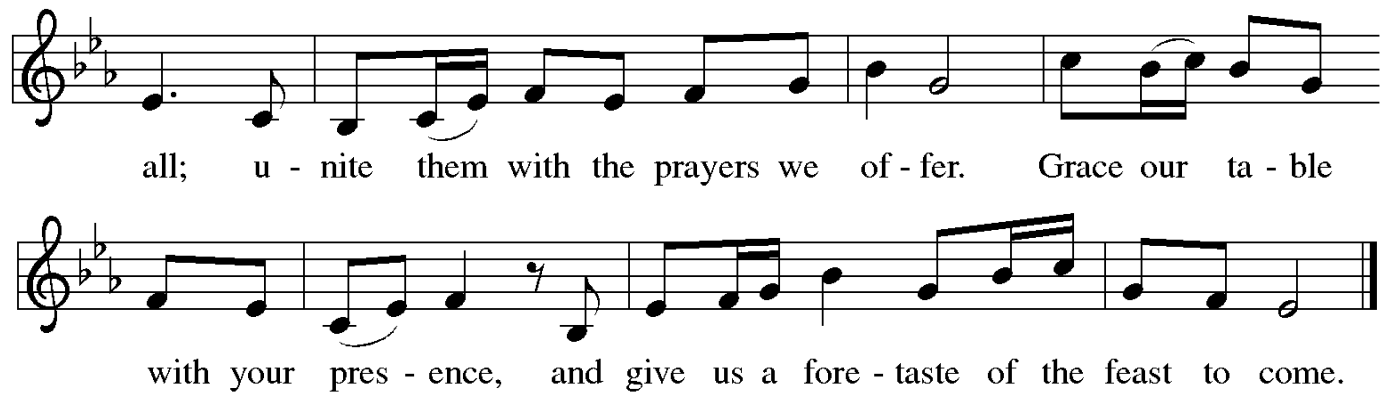


bles-sing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that



we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of





all; u - nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble  
with your pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

### OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Generous God,

**in this meal you offer your very self. We give thanks for these gifts of the earth. In the breaking of this bread reveal to us the Risen One. In the pouring of this wine pour us out in service to the world; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### HOLY COMMUNION

We thank you, God, for in the beginning you brought light out of darkness.

**From the dust of the earth you made us, lifted us, and breathed life into us.**

You make us your people, and promise to be our God.

**You walk with us through the valley of the shadow of death.**

You condemn the forces of injustice and oppression, and set free the imprisoned.

**You set us free from what binds us and go with us toward your new world.**

You raise up what is dead and lift up those who are without hope.

**Light out of darkness! Hope from despair! Life out of death!**

**This is your way. We give thanks, and with all Creation we praise you.**

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Pour out your Holy Spirit on these gifts of bread and cup, that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ.

**Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, that we may be the Body of Christ, who have died and have been raised to new life, to serve you in love without fear, in the power of your Holy Spirit and the strength of eternal life.**

## 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 know Christ, broken and poured out for 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.*

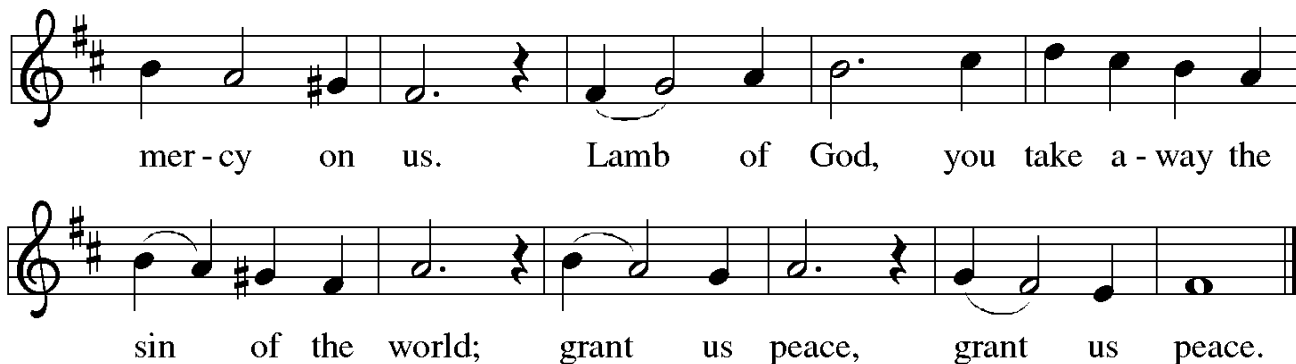
## THE COMMUNION



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

Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks

WOV 671

Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life

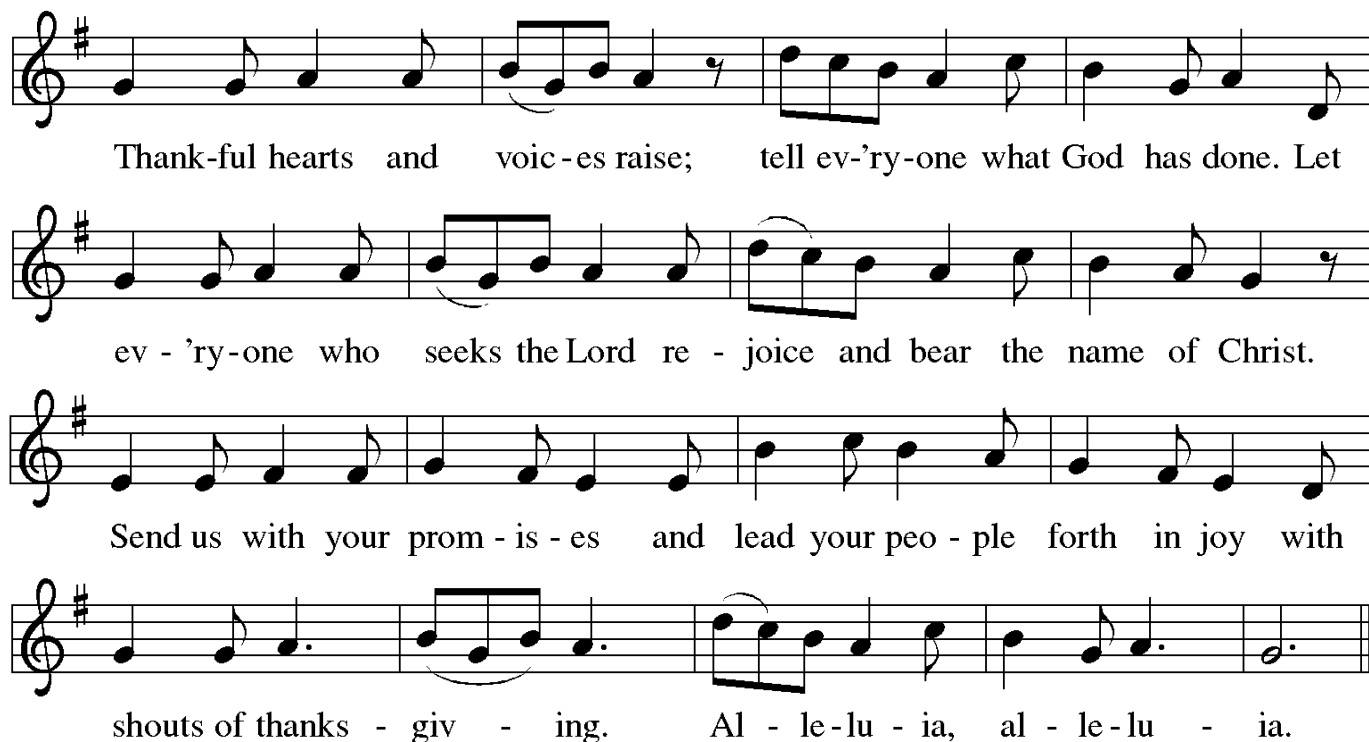
ELW 816

You Are the Way

ELW 758

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



Thank-ful hearts and voic-es raise; tell ev-'ry-one what God has done. Let  
ev - 'ry-one who seeks the Lord re - joice and bear the name of Christ.  
Send us with your prom - is - es and lead your peo - ple forth in joy with  
shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia.

## LEAVING TO SERVE

### BENEDICTION

The God of all, who raised † Jesus from the dead, bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit to live in the new creation.

**Amen.**


SENDING HYMN

Commonwealth Is God's Commandment

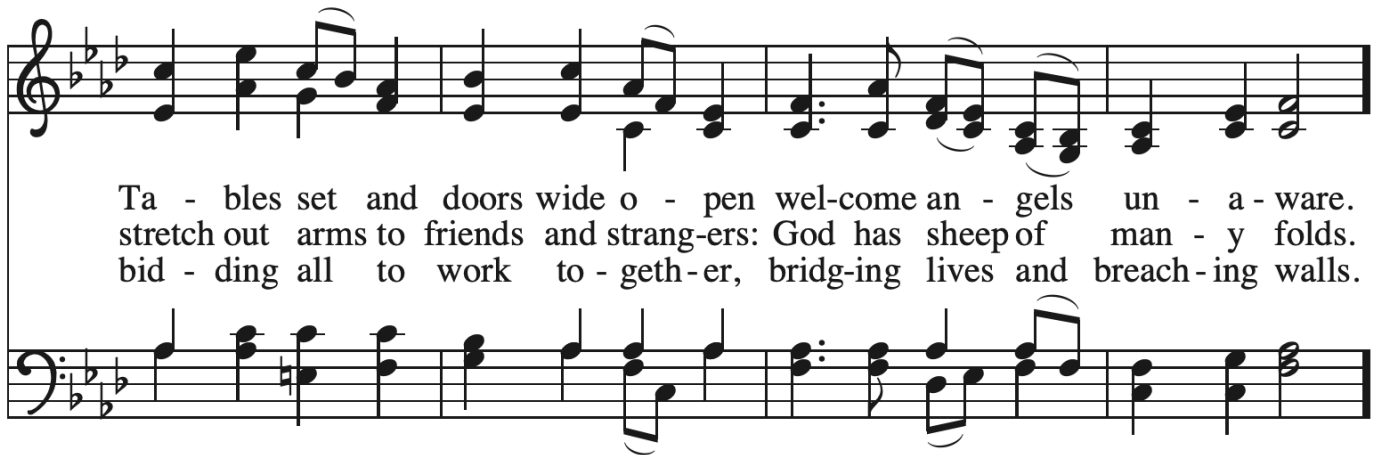
ACS 1036

*This hymn's refrain includes words meaning peace from other religious traditions. Shanti (Sanskrit) is pronounced "shan-tee" and is used in Hindu and Buddhist traditions. Pax (Latin) is pronounced "pahks." Shalom (Hebrew) is pronounced "shuh-lohm" and means peace, wholeness. Maslaha (Arabic) is pronounced "muhs-lah-hah" and means reconciliation.*

# Commonwealth Is God's Commandment

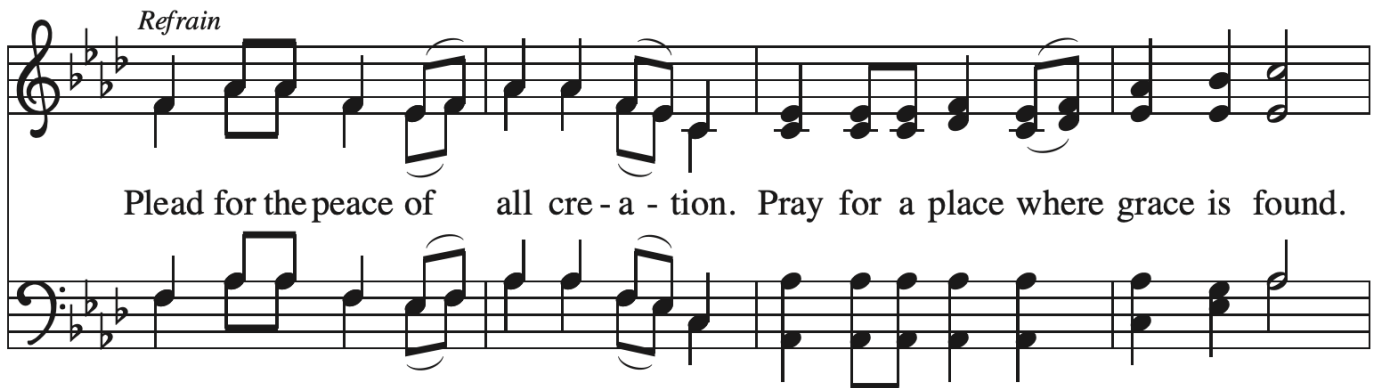


1 Com-mon-wealth is God's com-mand-ment; com-mon goods are meant to share.  
2 Shar-ing lav-ish gifts and bless-ings, love that not one mite with-holds,  
3 Gen-ders, rac-es, tribes, and na-tions, hear the Ho-ly One who calls,



Ta-bles set and doors wide o-pen wel-come an-gels un-a-ware.  
stretch out arms to friends and stran-gers: God has sheep of man-y folds.  
bid-ding all to work to-geth-er, bridg-ing lives and breach-ing walls.

*Refrain*



Plead for the peace of all cre-a-tion. Pray for a place where grace is found.



*Shan-ti, pax, sha-lom, mas-la-ha:* com-mon good is ho-ly ground.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Risen One.

**Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

A Mighty Fortress

*EIN FESTE BURG*  
setting, Wilbur Held

## **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? Talk with Mark Finke or one of the pastors following worship or contact Mark directly at [volunteersupport@blcfairport.org](mailto:volunteersupport@blcfairport.org).

**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).

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Thanksgiving for Baptism, adapted from Moravian Book of Worship, p. 92

Prayer of the Day, Affirmation of Faith, and portions of the Communion liturgy,

written by Steve Garnaas-Holmes, [www.unfoldinglight.net](http://www.unfoldinglight.net), used by permission.

Commonwealth Is God's Commandment: Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953

Music: RESTORATION, W. Walker, Southern Harmony, 1835

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## Overview

The words of today's gospel are most often heard during a funeral service. It is a popular choice of scripture for that occasion because the words provide wonderful assurance that the one who has died in Christ has now taken up residence in their heavenly home. The gospel begins by Jesus saying that he will prepare a place for each one of us. But as the text continues, we can see that our place is not an isolated room of our own in a giant heavenly mansion. Jesus' words are less about a place than a relationship: our relationship with Jesus and God the Father. They tell us that in Jesus we know all we need to know about God, and just as we can have a relationship with another human person, we can also have a relationship with God that will one day be as real and obvious as are our relationships with one another. The hope of one day being with Christ fully and forever is as real as the works we are called to do in his name today.

This text allows us the opportunity to contemplate what is ultimately unknowable, yet is also a central part of our faith: what heaven will be like.