



RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

JOHN 20:22

*Sunday, May 28, 2023
Day of 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

Sunday, May 28, 2023 ~ Day of Pentecost

PRELUDE

Come Down, O Love Divine

DOWN AMPNEY / Ralph Vaughan Williams
setting, Kristina Langlois

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pentecost derives its name from the Jewish festival celebrating the harvest and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai fifty days after Passover. Fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the Holy Spirit as God's presence within and among us. In Acts the Spirit arrives in rushing wind and flame, bringing God's presence to all people. Paul reminds us that though we each have different capacities, we are unified in the Spirit that equips us with these gifts. Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit on his disciples, empowering them to forgive sin. We celebrate that we too are given the breath of the Holy Spirit and sent out to proclaim God's redeeming love to all the world.

GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP

As you came as God's breath blowing at the birth of creation
Come, Holy Spirit! Fill us with life.

As you came as a force driving Jesus into the wilderness
Come, Holy Spirit! Fill us with clarity.

As you came as flames compelling the disciples to preach and proclaim
Come, Holy Spirit! Fill us with power.

As you came as advocate, as friend, as teacher, as guide
Come, Holy Spirit, Come!

As you have come from the beginning of creation
Come to us this day!

Come, Holy Spirit, Come!
Reveal to us your presence.

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

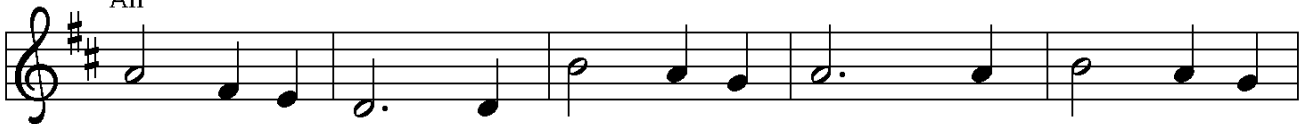
Refrain

Assisting minister



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.

All



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.

Refrain

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O God, on this day you open the hearts of your faithful people by sending into us your Holy Spirit. Direct us by the light of that Spirit, that we may have a right judgment in all things and rejoice at all times in your peace, through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

READING: Acts 2:1-21

Pentecost was a Jewish harvest festival that marked the fiftieth day after Passover. Luke portrays the Holy Spirit being poured out upon the disciples before the gathered and astonished people assembled in Jerusalem for the festival. Filled with the Spirit, the disciples were able to witness to the power of Christ's resurrection.

¹When the day of Pentecost had come, [the apostles] were all together in one place. ²And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

⁵Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹Parthians, Medes,

Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.” ¹²All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” ¹³But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”

¹⁴But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. ¹⁶No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷‘In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.

¹⁸Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.

¹⁹And I will show portents in the heaven above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.

²⁰The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day.

²¹Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ ”

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 20:19-23

The risen Jesus appears to his disciples, offering them a benediction, a commission, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY	O Living Breath of God	ELW 407
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assisted by Neil Vokes, cantor

Cantor: st. 1

All: sts. 2, 3

PRESENTATION OF THOSE AFFIRMING THEIR BAPTISMS

Today we have the privilege of witnessing as these sisters affirm their faith in Christ as well the promises made at their baptism. I invite each of you to stand where you are when you are named.

Sydney, Trysta, Emerson, Autumn, and Abby

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Congregation stands

Together with your siblings in Christ, you wish to profess your faith in God and reject sin. We make these bold statements not because we are absolutely certain about these things, but because we are always becoming faithful to them and learning to wrestle with these claims about our relationship with God. We join our voices with yours to remind you that we are all in this together.

People of God: Do you reject the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that pull us away from God? If so, say, “We do!”

We do!

Do you promise to continue supporting these children of God, affirming them through all circumstances with their first and forever name: Beloved? If so, say, “We do!”

We do!

Do you promise to hold space for them to keep growing in faith, so they learn to trust there is nothing they can do to make God love them any more or any less than they are already loved in Jesus? If so, say, “We do!”

We do!

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**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 to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

Congregation is seated

AFFIRMATION IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ASSEMBLY

Will you join us in practicing your faith and keeping these responsibilities:
to live among God's faithful people, to pray,
to hear the word of God and share the Lord's Supper,
to learn the prayers, creeds, and commandments, to open the holy Scriptures,
to be nurtured by the faith and prayers of others,
so that you learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for
others and the world God made and work for justice and peace?

I will ask each of you to respond individually by saying, "*I will, and I ask God to help me.*"

People of God, do you promise to support these sisters and brothers and pray
for them in their life in Christ?

We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.

PRAYER FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT

After all confirmands have been prayed for:

Join me in celebrating with these sisters and brother in Christ.

We celebrate your faith, your voice, and your unfolding story as beloved children of God! On behalf of the whole church on earth, we will continue to pray for your faith and give thanks for you. God bless you!

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 Passionate God, you sent your Spirit through the gifts of fire, wind, and word.
As you equipped the disciples for their work, equip us to bring the good news to
all those who long for you. Risen Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

#2 Restoring God, wind and flame bring life and destruction throughout the world. We pray for those who work with wind energy, for migratory birds, for protection for lands facing destructive fire, for forestry managers and firefighters. Renew the face of the earth. Risen Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

#3 Ever-present God, your spirit embraces all. Send your spirit of understanding to immigrants, refugees, and any experiencing language barriers. Bless the work of translators, ESL teachers, ambassadors, and international peace organizations. Safely guide those fleeing war and danger. Risen Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, you make all things new. We give today for those affirming their faith: Sydney, Trysta, Emerson, Autumn, and Abby. Strengthen and renew the relationships we share with these members and friends of Bethlehem and their families: Bev & Brian, Pat, Sara, Justin & Nicole (Leah & Owen), and Linnea & Scott. 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:

- Angelo P., father of Marianne H.
- Linnea D., who died on 5/17
- Rachel S., daughter of John C's cousin Rick, who died 5/2

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Anita T. who is recovering from a recent fall and hospitalization
- Deborah P., mother of Marianne H. who entered hospice
- Ritva E., mother of Marja R., who is facing multiple medical challenges

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.

OFFERING OF MUSIC

This Little Light of Mine

African American spiritual
arr. Joel Raney

four-hand piano duet
assisted by Michael Koncilja, piano

OFFERTORY



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



bless-ing. 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.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

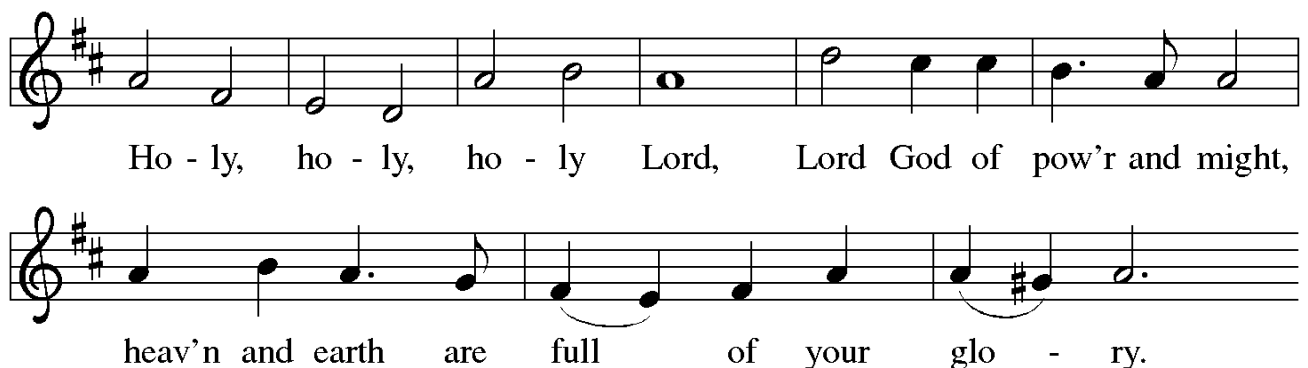
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

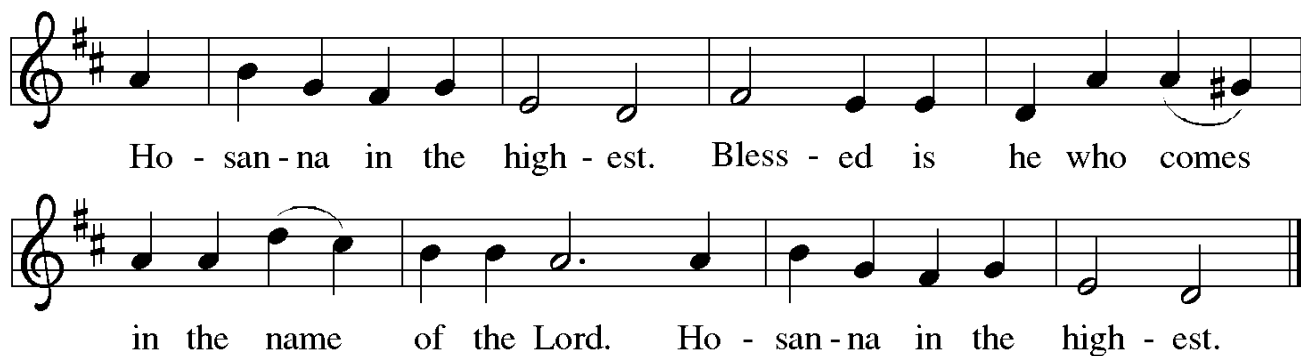
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



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

Gracious Spirit, Heed Our Pleading
Spirit of the Living God

ELW 401
W&P 129

F Gm⁷/B^b D/A Gm F/C C⁷ F

Spir - it of the liv - ing God, fall fresh on me,

F Gm⁷/B^b D/A Gm F/C C⁷ F

Spir - it of the liv - ing God, fall fresh on me.

B^b F G⁷ C F/C C⁷

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.

F Gm⁷/B^b D/A Gm F/C C⁷ F

Spir - it of the liv - ing God, fall fresh on me.

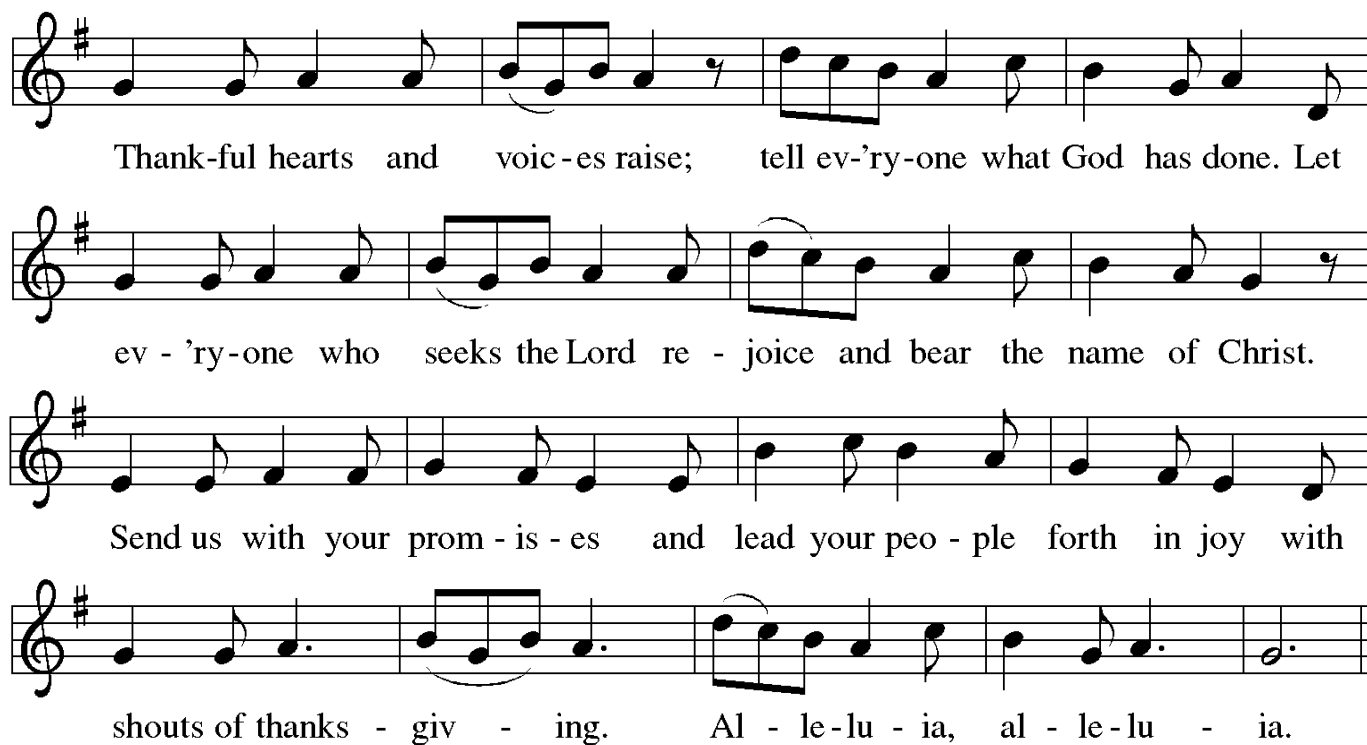
COMMUNION HYMN

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

ELW 815

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	Every Time I Feel the Spirit	ACS 942
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Every Time I Feel the Spirit

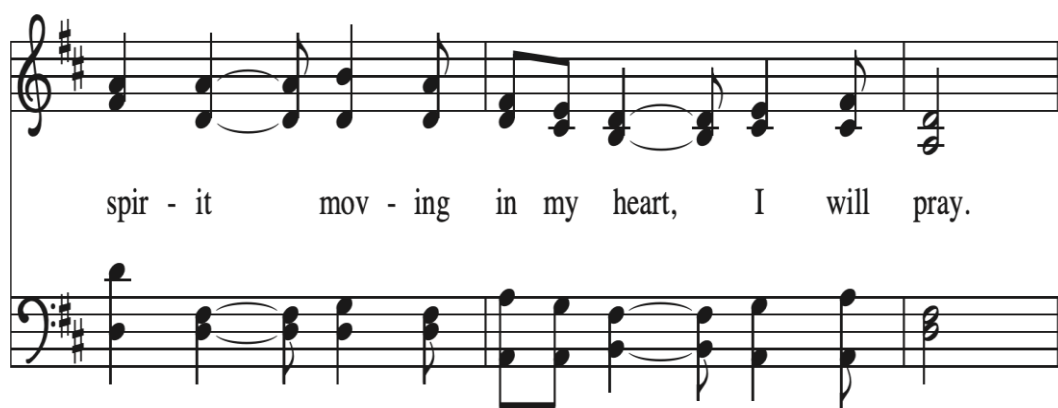
Refrain



Ev - 'ry time I feel the spir - it mov - ing



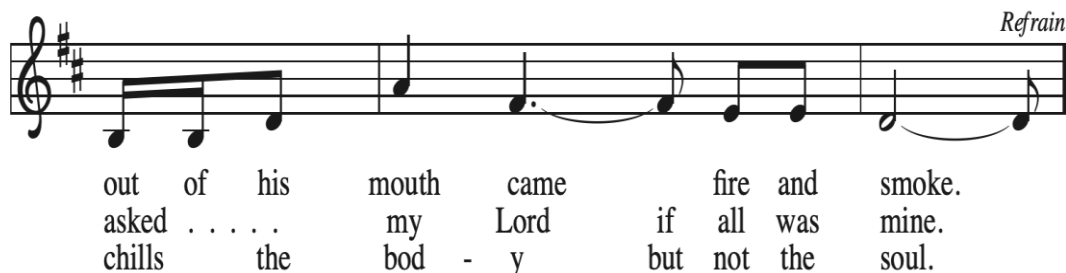
in my heart, I will pray. Ev - 'ry time I feel the



spir - it mov - ing in my heart, I will pray.



- 1 Up - on the moun - tain my Lord spoke,
- 2 . . All a - round me looked so fine,
- 3 . . Jor - dan riv - er, chilly and cold,



out of his mouth came fire and smoke.
asked my Lord if all was mine.
chills the bod - y but not the soul.

Refrain

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Risen One.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Hail Thee, Festival Day

SALVE FESTA DIES / Ralph Vaughan Williams
setting, Robert A. Hobby

The red flowers that signify Pentecost and decorate the Sanctuary
were given to God's glory by the following:

Bill Antell in memory of Georgene Antell

Kathleen Forney in memory of Jean Forney and Ralph and Betty Beuel

Carolyn French in memory of Steve French

Sandy Goehle in honor of loved ones

Ruth and Jeff Hedin in memory our parents

*Judy Lohr in memory of Bob Lohr and our parents, Allen and Dorothy Lohr and
Edward and Loretta Baldasari*

Todd Schaeber in honor of Nana

John Schmeelk in memory of Robert Schmeelk

Susan Towsley in memory of Jack and Genia Kellow

GerryAnn and Wayne Westcott in honor of our grandchildren

We regret any omissions or errors made.

Meet Bethlehem's 2023 Confirmands



Nathan David Chaffee

Family at BLC: Parents – Patty and David, Siblings - Michael Chaffee, Beth and Luke Trippi

School: Johanna Perrin

Activities/Interests/Hobbies: baseball, bowling, clarinet, youth events and worship at church

Bible verse: Keep alert; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. 1 Corinthians 16:13

Nathan says: This verse reminds me to be strong when people are sick and that my faith can help. I also like to serve and help people, so I can be courageous through my faith while doing that.



Leah Hope Erdley

Family at BLC: Parents – Justin and Nicole, Sibling - Owen

School: Willink Middle School

Activities: Outside of school I like to read as well as dance. Inside of school I am a part of chorus and I also enjoy science class. I served as an acolyte and was a part of the children's choir, and also participated in the kid's bell choir.

Bible Verse: There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: . . . a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance. Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4

Leah says: These two verses are special to me because of the two words laugh and dance. The word laugh stands out to me because laughter is an important piece of the relationships I share with my family and friends. Each of my friends and family know how to make me laugh when I am upset and I love that about them. My friends and I love to laugh about inside jokes and funny stories every day at school. One of my favorite things to do with my family is to sit around the card table and laugh with all of them. Another place where I experience laughter a lot is in the dance studio. The studio is one of my favorite places and it has been for a long time. Dancing just takes the weight off of my shoulders and it makes me feel free. I truly do believe that there is a time and place for everything and that makes these two verses even more special.



Charlotte Finkbeiner

Family at BLC: Parents – Annette and David, Siblings - Julia and Olivia

Bible Verse: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

Charlotte writes: The verse from Romans 15:13 is meaningful to me because it shows how God can bring me happiness when I trust in him. I enjoy making music, and playing soccer. When I play music, sometimes I think about how lucky I am to have that gift from God. Also, when someone on my team, or a competitor gets injured on or off the field, I know that God will help them. This verse shows that when I trust God, and am in need, he will provide me with happiness and relief.



Sydney Rose Oliverio

Family at BLC: Parents – James and Shannon, Sibling - Grady

School: Johanna Perrin

Activities/Interests/Hobbies: Tumbling, Soccer, Track and Field, Horse back riding

Bible Verse: He will keep you safe from all hidden dangers and from all deadly diseases. He will cover you with his wing; you will be safe in his care; his faithfulness will protect and defend you. Psalm 91:3-4

Sydney says: I chose this verse as it gives me comfort that GOD will always be there for me during my hardest times. I notice that I look to God a lot when I'm feeling down, and this verse is an excellent reminder for me when I feel upset. No matter what you believe. God will always be there to protect and comfort you, even when you may not feel his presence. I also look to God in Church when I pray for the well-being of my family and friends. I have faith that God will protect my family and help them overcome their own obstacles in life. I feel that I can also be there for my friends and help them to feel loved when they may not have the courage to feel God in their life. God has given me the faith and confidence to always know I will be loved, protected and comforted even if I'm sick, feeling down or feeling lonely.



Trysta Reafler

Family at BLC: Parents - Robyn and Hans

School: Penfield

Activities/interests/hobbies: Track & Field, Skiing, Horseback Riding, Confirmation Class

Bible verse: I can do all things through him who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13

Trysta says: This verse connects to me because when I put my mind to things with God's help I can get them done. God makes me feel strong by supporting me through hard times. I can turn to him when I need his help figuring out challenging things. God also guards me and makes me feel safe. He is always here for me no matter what. I feel like I can do anything because I have him by my side every step of the way through ups and downs strengthening and supporting me.



Emerson Schaeber

Family at BLC: Todd, Sara, and Abigail Schaeber

School: Minerva Deland

Activities/Interests/Hobbies: Playing the bass, reading, and baking, Holy Week Liturgical Staging

Bible Verse: But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. Luke 6:27-29

Emerson says: I feel as though these verses truly speak to me as a person. Being kind is extremely important to me and I think that even if someone doesn't necessarily reciprocate that kindness, it should be given to them anyways. People deserve unconditional understanding and love, and I try to live by those principles.



Autumn Grace Schoenfeld

Family at BLC: Parents – Kevin and Beth, Sibling - Ilana, Grandparents - Fred, and Rory Schoenfeld

School: Johanna Perrin Middle School

Activities/Interests/Hobbies: I am a part of JP Leaders, Huddle, Gardening and Sustainability Club, BSA Troop 2019 I am almost Star Rank, JP track team, Youth Group at Brown Croft Community Church in Penfield, and I play Viola. I am involved in at BLC is Confirmation Class.

Bible Verse: Instead, love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Luke 6:35

Autumn says: This verse is meaningful to me because it shows that you should be a Good Samaritan to everyone whether they are your favorite person or not and you should expect nothing in return. There are so many people today who will not help people today because they expect something in return. Also, there are so many people today who need help but don't receive it because the people who would help them expect something in return but they know they won't get it because the person can't give them something in return.



Abigail Lynn Teasdale

Parents/siblings/family at BLC: Parents: Bill and Joanna, Siblings - Billy and Ben

School: Minerva DeLand (Fairport)

Activities/interests/hobbies (in and out of school): I enjoy spending time with family and volunteering in the Fairport community. I am an advocate for C.U.R.E Childhood Cancer and have raised funds to support the organization. I am involved in the Drama Club, Helping Hands Club, Yearbook Club and the T.I.E.S Program at Minerva DeLand, Bible

School and helping in the Nursery

Bible verse: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9

Abby says: I have had many challenges in my life and through these challenges, I've had to be strong and brave when overcoming obstacles. I know God is with me and he has given me courage to battle all I may face wherever I go.



Lily Leilani Elizabeth Weidner

Family at BLC: Parent – Mike; Siblings - Addie and George, Grandparent - Shiellee Weidner

School: Victor Junior High School

Activities: Track & Field, Soccer, Horseback Riding, Piano, Violin, Confirmation Class

Bible Verse: Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18

Lily says: This is important to me because you should never be blind and fall into the darkness, thinking you are fine. You must be filled with light and the Spirit of God to enjoy and live a healthy, happy life.



Olivia Violet Shiellee Weidner

Family at BLC: Parent – Mike; Siblings - Addie and George, Grandparent - Shiellee Weidner

Activities: Track & Field, Soccer, Horseback Riding, Piano, Trombone, Confirmation Class

Bible Verse: Sarah lived to be 127 years old. Genesis 23:1

Olivia says: This verse is special to me because 127 years old is a long time to live. It was also unheard of that someone lived to be over 100 years old.

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.

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: 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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Every Time I Feel the Spirit: Text: African American spiritual

Music: PENTECOST, African American spiritual; arr. Melva W. Costen, b. 1933

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God Gives More than Enough

It is the “first day of the week” (John 20:19), the day of the new creation, but to those locked away in the upper room in fear, the world is as it always has been. So entrenched are they in the ways of grief and guilt that the Risen One in their midst needs to offer his life-giving invitation twice: “Peace be with you.” The logic of the new age is peace, not retribution; forgiveness, not vengeance. With the invitation to new life comes also the means: the gift of the Holy Spirit, breathed upon them and within them. Just as the Father sent Jesus into the world, so now are these disciples sent as witnesses to God’s saving work.

Pentecost is therefore the crowning achievement of the Jesus story. Now, more than ever, these huddled disciples would have just cause to sing the “Dayenu” (“It would have been enough”) verses from the Passover seder meal, but revised: It would have been enough for the Word and wisdom of God to have been born in the flesh . . . Dayenu! It would have been enough for the Word to grow to adulthood and share his stunning parables about God’s gracious activity in the world . . . Dayenu! It would have been enough for this Word to say to his enemies, “Father, forgive them” . . . Dayenu! It would have been enough for this Word to have died on a cross for us . . . Dayenu! It would have been enough that he rose again in blessing, not vengeance . . . Dayenu! But now, beyond what we would even expect—the Word becomes our word and it is written on our hearts at Pentecost . . . Dayenu! It is enough, and more than enough to enflame our ministry of reconciliation in a world in need of a healing word.