



Give to God
the things
that are God's

MATTHEW 22:21

*Sunday, October 22, 2023
21st Sunday after Pentecost*



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, October 22, 2023 ~ 21st Sunday after Pentecost

PRELUDE

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise
(*ST. DENIO*)

Welsh folk tune
setting, Michael Burkhardt

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In today's gospel reading, the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be God, the one who forms us, † Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

Amen.

Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Steadfast and faithful God,
you have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you. We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering. We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others. For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us. For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation, forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor, forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path; in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Beloved in Christ, God's justice stretches beyond all understanding. God's compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us. In † Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good

ELW 871

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

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Shine Your Light

based on Matthew 5:14-16

Terry D. Taylor

BLC Children' Choir

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 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming. The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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

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

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 22:15-22

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" ²¹They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." ²²When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

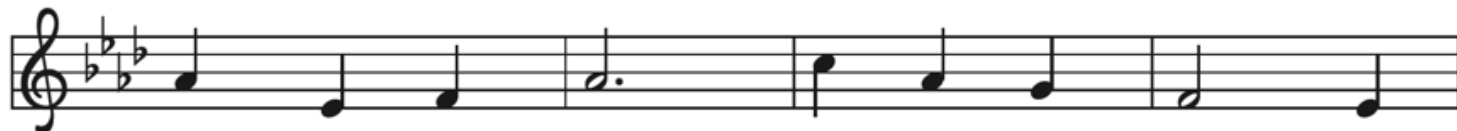
SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

God's Work, Our Hands

ACS 1000

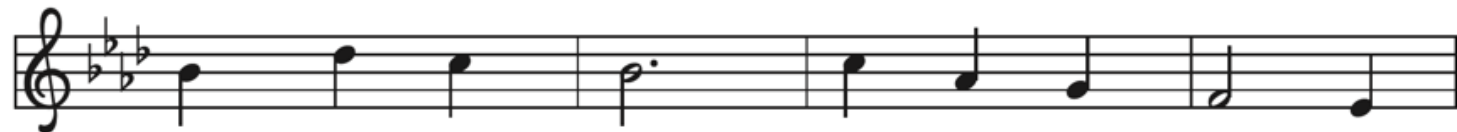
God's Work, Our Hands



1 God's work, our hands: work - ing to - geth - er,
2 God's work, our feet: trav - 'ling to - geth - er,
3 God's work, our voice: sing - ing to - geth - er,
4 God is at work in and a - round us:



build - ing a fu - ture, re - pair - ing the world,
fol - low - ing Je - sus to plac - es un - known,
prais - ing, pro - claim - ing to all who will hear,
seed - lings are sprout - ing and bread's on the rise!



rais - ing up homes, plant - ing new gar - dens,
walk - ing as friends, march - ing for free - dom,
pray - ing for peace, shout - ing for jus - tice,
Washed and set free, hum - bled and hon - ored,



Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,
Bless, God, our feet as we fol - low your way,
Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,
Bless, God, our lives as we an - swer your call,



shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.

APOSTLES' CREED

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

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

**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.**

**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. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

#1 Faithful God, your Spirit animates the church throughout the world and binds believers near and far into the body of Christ. Equip us for the work of faith, and enlarge our hearts for the labor of love. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

#2 Sovereign God, your rule and authority is over the cosmos. Accomplish your purposes through the work of elected leaders and public servants especially the leaders of the world in this turbulent time. Guide them with your wisdom and compassion. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

#3 Almighty God, all our life belongs to you. When earthly idols threaten to lead your church astray, remind us that you alone are the source of our eternal hope. Direct the work of church treasurers, councils, and all who manage financial matters. Be with us all as we meet as a congregation next week. May the decisions we make be to your glory. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

By the power of your Spirit, you build us into your beloved community. Strengthen the connections we share with these members and friends of Bethlehem and their families: Cheryl (Seth, Vanessa), Alli & Jim, (Paige), Paul, Jim & Shannon (Grady, Sydney), and Ron. Strengthen the ministries we share with others, especially our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

God of all compassion, pour out your mercy to those who live in the midst of violence and war and those struggling in body, mind, or spirit.

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

- Chick F., who died on 10/8
- Don R., father of Kim K., who died on 10/10

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Kathy F. recovering from a recent hospitalization

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

Silence for individual prayer.

Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

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

Lift High the Cross

(CRUCIFER)

text, Geroge Kitchin and Michael Newbolt

music, Paul J. Christiansen

tune, Sidney H. Nicholson

The Chancel Choir

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 now. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,
Lord, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. God of power, God of plenty,
all things belong to you. We bring your gifts to the table, that all might be fed.
Form us into the body of your Beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior.
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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Lord Jesus, you are resurrection and life.
We give thanks that at your table you fill us with good things and feed us from your abundance.
Pour out your Spirit on us and this feast of love.
Build us into a lasting community that embodies your love. Strengthen us to serve you in all we do. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

One in body, one in Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us:
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

Jesus invites you to this table. Come, eat and live.
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

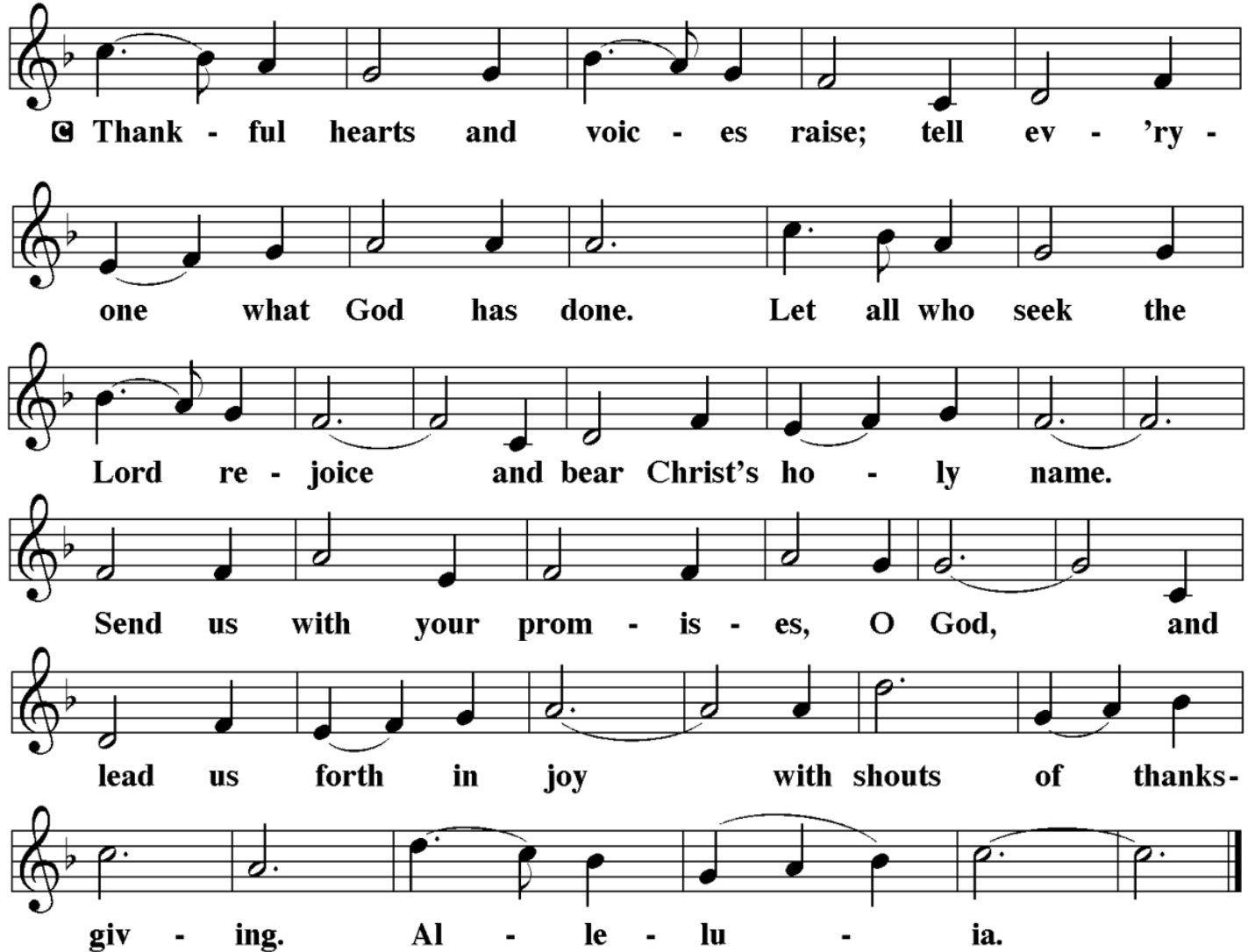
All My Hope on God Is Founded
Take My Life, That I May Be

ELW 757

ELW 583

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



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

LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds
in † Christ Jesus.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

O God of Every Nation

ELW 713

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Doxology Postlude

(OLD HUNDREDTH)

Peter Pindar Stearns

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.

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

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.

Notice of congregational meeting - Sunday, October 29 following worship. Please plan to attend Bethlehem's annual congregational meeting. Your presence will help us achieve the required quorum to conduct essential business of the congregation, including adopting a spending plan for the fiscal year. This meeting is in-person only.

What's in Your Wallet? Not Enough.

Say the word stewardship in some congregations and people are protectively guarding their wallets faster than you can say “pledge card!” Unfortunately, too often we associate stewardship exclusively with issues of money. The good news is that God has little interest in our wallets. God wants our whole lives, wallets and all! Nevertheless, this week is prime time for stewardship campaigns in congregations around the country. The stewardship theme is reflected in our announcements, our prayers, our songs, and our readings. Today's gospel provides an ideal time to reflect on stewardship of all sorts—time, talent, and financial treasures.

The Pharisees approach Jesus in a thinly veiled attempt to trap him on issues of financial obligations to the Roman government. Their question of Jesus, simplified to the extreme, is “who gets your wallet?” If Jesus answered one way, he would be guilty of treason. If he answered the other way, he would have been considered guilty of heresy in the eyes of the religious leaders. Jesus responds by issuing a challenge of his own—give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and give to God what belongs to God. This statement challenges us to ponder: if God created the world and everything in it, what doesn't belong to God? God wants a whole lot more than just your wallet. God wants your life, wallet and all!

.