



Jesus took her
by the hand
and lifted
her up

MARK 1:31

*Sunday, February 4, 2024
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany*



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, February 4, 2024 ~ *Fifth Sunday after Epiphany*

PRELUDE

Children of the Heavenly Father

Swedish folk tune
setting, Kevin Hildebrand

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In Isaiah the one God who sits above the earth and numbers the stars also strengthens the powerless. So in Jesus' healing work we see the hand of the creator God, lifting up the sick woman to health and service (diakonia). Like Simon's mother-in-law, we are lifted up and healed to serve. Following Jesus, we strengthen the powerless; like Jesus, we seek to renew our own strength in quiet times of prayer.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who stretches out the heavens, who sends light to the nations, who gives breath to us all.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Loving God,

we confess that we have turned from your way to follow our own ways. Forgive us for the times we have spoken or acted too quickly; we have not spoken or acted at all; we have hurt those closest to us; we have hurt those we have yet to know; we have thought more about ourselves than others; we have thought less of ourselves than we ought. Turn us around, and give us a fresh start, so that we can live again as your children. Amen.

Even when we have done wrong, God makes us right. Even when we have messed up, God puts us together. God's love never runs out. God never tires of calling us beloved children. Hear God say to you now: Your sins are forgiven, for the sake of † Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

ELW 858

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 - ria, glo - ria, glo - ria en las al - tu - ras a Dios!
Glo - ria, glo - ria, glo - ria, glo - ry to God . . on high!



¡Glo - ria, glo - ria, glo - ria en las al - tu - ras a Dios!
Glo - ria, glo - ria, glo - ria, glo - ry to God . . on high!



Y en la tie - rra paz pa-ra a-que-llos que a-ma el Se - ñor.
And on earth . . . peace to God's peo-ple. Glo - ry to God.



Y en la tie - rra paz pa-ra a-que-llos que a-ma el Se - ñor.
And on earth . . . peace to God's peo-ple. Glo - ry to God.

assisted by BLC Percussion Ensemble

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Everlasting God, you give strength to the weak and power to the faint. Make us agents of your healing and wholeness, that your good news may be made known to the ends of your creation, 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 40:21-31

The Judeans in exile have a good reason to be hopeful: the one who will bring them to freedom is the God who created the world, the God who subdues the rulers of the earth and gives strength to those who are weary.

²¹Have you not known? Have you not heard?

Has it not been told you from the beginning?

Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

²²It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and spreads them like a tent to live in;

²³who brings princes to naught,
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

²⁴Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,
when he blows upon them, and they wither,
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

²⁵To whom then will you compare me,
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.

²⁶Lift up your eyes on high and see:
Who created these?

He who brings out their host and numbers them,
calling them all by name;
because he is great in strength,
mighty in power,
not one is missing.

²⁷Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,

“My way is hidden from the LORD,
and my right is disregarded by my God”?

²⁸Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.

²⁹He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.

³⁰Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;

³¹but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



*;*A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



*;*A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

;A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya,
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
 a - le - lu - ya! a - le - lu - ya!
 al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

The holy gospel according to Mark.
Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:29-39

Everywhere Jesus goes, many people expect him to set them free from oppression. Everywhere he goes, he heals people and sets them free. Disease, devils, and death are running for their lives. The forces that diminish human life are rendered powerless by Jesus.

²⁹As soon as [Jesus and the disciples] left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰Now Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³²That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

³⁵In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷When they found him, they said to him, “Everyone is searching for you.” ³⁸He answered, “Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do.” ³⁹And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Cast Out, O Christ

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Cast Out, O Christ'. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are printed below the vocal line of each system.

1 Cast out, O Christ, cast far a - way the
2 Our rag - ing griefs, our jeal - ous fears are
3 Once long a - go, from Gal - i - lee, you
4 Your word breathes life and health and hope that
5 So come, O Christ, and cast a - way the

de - mons that de - stroy: the haunt - ing dreads that
Le - gion in their name. Our shack - led hearts im -
sailed to storm - tossed shores. And still, in pow'r, you
break through e - vil's thrall. You send us, strength - ened,
de - mons that de - stroy. Trans - form our lives to

choke our souls, the hates that sti - fle joy.
plore your grace to loose our bind - ing shame.
brave new paths to breach our bolt - ed doors.
home in peace to live your gos - pel call.
sense your love and spread a - broad your joy.

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.

As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

#1 Everlasting God, you bring your healing power to the church. Give your church a spirit of unity and prayer, that we discern your way for us in the world. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

#2 God who gives power to the faint, challenge us to share the faith stories of what God has done in our lives. Open us to receive the unique ways God is at work in your people, especially those whose perspectives challenge our own. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

#3 God without equal, your steadfast love endures forever. Bring the leaders, elected officials, and peacekeepers of our towns and countries into understanding and unity. Guide them to serve with compassion and understanding. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

We follow you in showing love and care in our world. We pray for these members and friends of Bethlehem and their families: Anita, Bethany, Luke, Don & Vicki, Neil. Be with our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe as they follow where you lead. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

Making yourself known to those struggling in body, mind or spirit, provide for those in any need.

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

- Matthew Z, nephew of Glen Z and Jane M, who died on 1/20

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Wayne, father-in-law of Mary O, who has been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer
- Ginny S, who is recovering from surgery (remove after 2/11)
- Anita T, who is recovering from surgery (remove after 2/4)

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

Silence for individual prayer.

God of grace,
receive our prayer.

Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, 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

The Child

Susan Borwick

The Chancel Choir

OFFERTORY

Refrain



Take my life, that I _____ may be _____ con-se-crat - ed, Lord, _____ to thee;



take my mo - ments and _____ my days; let them flow in cease - less praise.



Take my will and make _____ it thine; it shall be no lon - ger mine;



take my heart, it is _____ thine own; it shall be thy roy - al throne.

to Refrain

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Blessed are you, Holy One,

for all good things come from you. In bread and cup you open heaven to us.

Meet us at this table, that we receive what we seek and follow your Son, Jesus,

in whose name we pray. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

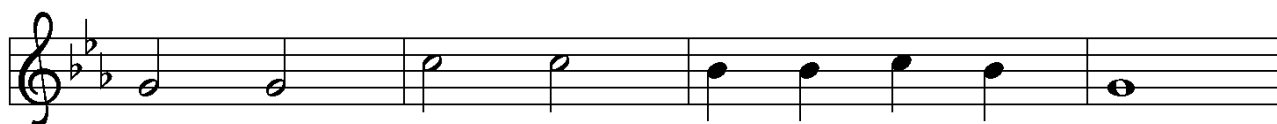
Lift up your hearts.

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 . . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



San - to, san - to, san - to_es el Se - ñor,
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord . . . God,



Dios del u - ni - ver - so; san - to_es el Se - ñor.
God of might and pow - er; ho - ly is the Lord.



San - to, san - to, san - to, san - to_es el Se - ñor,
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord . . . God,



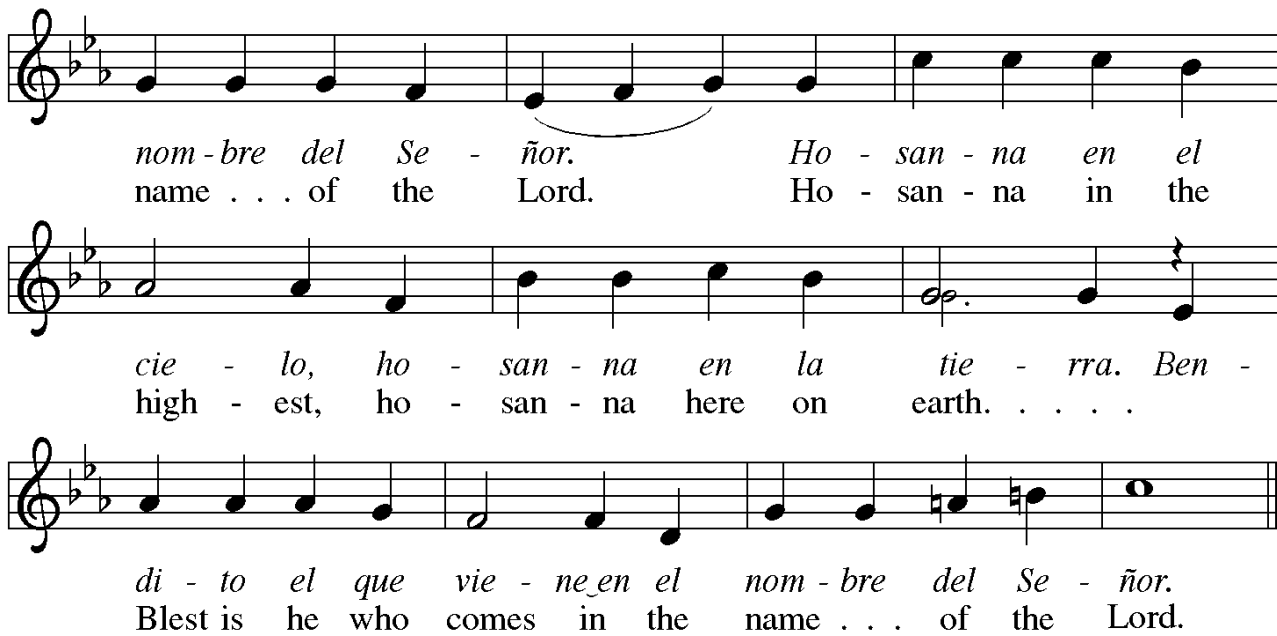
Dios del u - ni - ver - so; san - to_es el Se - ñor.
God of might and pow - er; ho - ly is the Lord.



Ho - san - na en el cie - lo, ho - san - na en la
Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na here on



tie - rra. Ben - di - to el que vie - ne en el
earth. Blest is he who comes in the



nom - bre del Se - ñor. Ho - san - na en el
name . . . of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the

cie - lo, ho - san - na en la tie - rra. Ben -
high - est, ho - san - na here on earth. . . .

di - to el que vie - ne en el nom - bre del Se - ñor.
Blest is he who comes in the name . . . of the Lord.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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

At Jesus' table, heaven and earth are joined as one. Come and see.

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



*Cor - de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .*



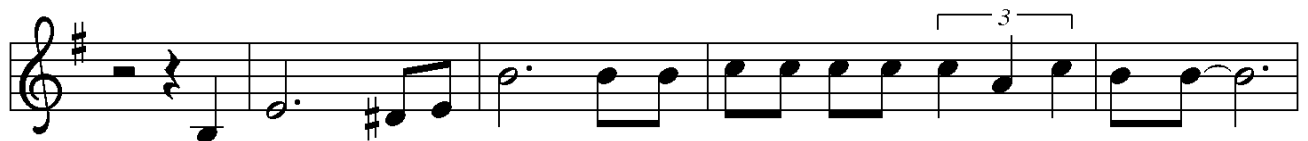
*ten pie-dad de no - so - tros, ten pie-dad de no - so - tros.
have . . mer-cy up - on us, have . . mer-cy up - on us.*



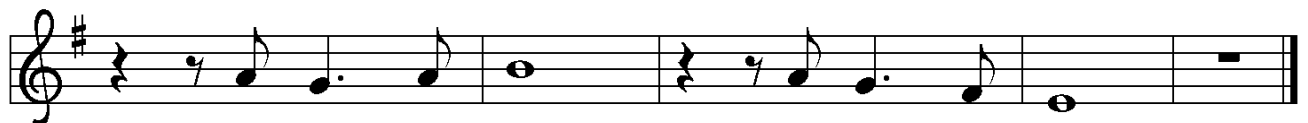
*Cor-de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .*



*ten pie-dad de no - so - tros, ten pie-dad de no - so - tros.
have . . mer-cy up - on us, have . . mer-cy up - on us.*



*Cor-de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .*



*da - nos tu paz, da - nos tu paz.
grant us your peace, grant us your peace.*

COMMUNION HYMN

When We Are Living

We Come to You for Healing, Lord

ELW 639

ELW 617

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



Tu - ya es la glo - ria, la hon - ra tam - bién;
 1 Yours, Lord, is the glo - ry, and hon - or as well;
 2 Yours, Lord, the do - min - ions, and pow - er as well;
 3 To you I sur - ren - der my be - ing, my life;
 4 Glo - ry in the high - est, and on earth as well.



tu - ya pa - ra siem - pre. A - mén, a - mén.
 yours, Lord, now and al - ways.
 yours, Lord, now and al - ways.
 all, Lord, I sur - ren - der. A - men, a - men.
 Glo - ry, al - le - lu - ia.

LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

God who names you, Christ who claims you, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you, ✠ bless you and remain with you always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN	I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me	ELW 860
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assisted by bassist: Alison Henry

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. You are God's beloved.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Prelude and Fugue in F Major, BWV 556

Johann Sebastian Bach

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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Come to Me, O Weary Traveler: Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1955-1993; Music: AUSTIN, William P. Rowan, b. 1951

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God Heals Persons and Communities

When Jesus heals us, we are empowered to serve others. While at first glance it might seem that Jesus' healing of Peter's mother-in-law was self-serving, on further reflection we see the same result in nearly all of his signs and miracles. The object of Jesus' compassion now has new responsibilities. In the very next chapter a paralytic lowered through the ceiling is raised, only to become the center of a religious controversy (Mark 2:3-12), as was the man who lay by the pool of Beth-zatha for thirty-eight years (John 5:2-15). When Jesus calms the storm (Mark 4:35-41) the disciples have to row the rest of the way! Any meaningful encounter with Jesus will result in our being changed, which in turn alters the way we see our relationship to the needs of others and the world.

Hard economic times, natural disasters, and divisive, party strife can make us feel helpless and hopeless, as if we have been abandoned by God. Even the church—local congregations as well as denominations—may feel fear and panic in the face of declining numbers and revenues, loss of loyalty from members, indifference or hostility from the surrounding culture, and internal sniping among factions. The exiled people of Israel in Babylon experienced all of this and more, so our condition is neither unique nor beyond the reach of our God. Isaiah 40:21-31 in the NRSV begins "Have you not known? Have you not heard?" Eugene Peterson, in *The Message*, translates this idea as "Have you not been paying attention? Have you not been listening?" There is some irony indeed that God's church, entrusted with God's salvation history and the gospel, still panics, still doubts and worries, still feels like it is up to us to save the church. We indeed are "clay jars" (2 Cor. 4:7)—carrying the message but not understanding, preaching salvation but not believing that God cares or will act to save. We live Isaiah 40 every day.