



**Wandering  
Heart** *"Teach me"*

*Sunday, March 17, 2024  
Fifth Sunday in Lent*



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, March 17, 2024 ~ *Fifth Sunday in Lent***

### PRELUDE

Ubi caritas

(Where true charity is, God is there)

11th-cent. Latin hymn  
setting, Alan Bullard

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Peter is often all or nothing, either resisting Jesus or drawing closer to him in earnest. In this scripture, we see a version of Peter who is hungry to learn. His posture is humble and open—he wants to absorb Jesus’ teachings like a wet sponge. He asks a question and might expect a straightforward answer: “How many times should I forgive?” Instead, Jesus’ math is not predictable—it’s infinite. Forgiveness is abundant; grace is not earned. In your own faith, do you find comfort in theological formulas? Do you wish for straightforward answers? Can you let go of black-and-white thinking and instead embrace the infinite colors of grace?*

### **GATHERING**

#### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Let us pray: Holy God,  
**forgive us for the times when we fail to be curious. Forgive us for the times when we assume we know best. Forgive us for the moments when we imagine that our learning is done and that we have all the answers. Make us brave. Spark a desire in us to learn, and may our curiosity carry our faith into deeper waters. With hope and humility we pray. Amen.**

No matter what you have done or left undone, no matter what lessons you have learned or are still learning, God's abundant grace exists for you. God's love will never run out. Hear and rest in this good news: † You are forgiven. You are loved. You are invited to serve. Thanks be to God!

**Amen**

GATHERING HYMN

Making Their Way

ACS 979



1 Mak-ing their way down through the a - ges, sin - ners and saints have  
2 Mak-ing their way all the world o - ver, Chris - tians as - sem - ble  
3 Mak-ing our way sea - son by sea-son, pil - grims, we jour - ney



heard God's call: wealth - y and poor, pow - er - ful, low - ly,  
on this day, hear - ing the Word, shar - ing the Ban - quet,  
till life's end, trav - el - ing light, shar - ing the rich - es,



Je - sus' dis - ci - ples, one and all. Gath - ered for wor - ship, of - fer - ing thanks,  
learn - ing to walk in Je - sus' way. Mem - bers of Christ, u - nit - ed in love,  
car - ing for strang - er as for friend, till in the joy of long - ing ful - filled,



the great - est with the least have come to share this feast.  
they seek our God to know, and so to - geth - er grow.  
to - geth - er we will come to our e - ter - nal home.

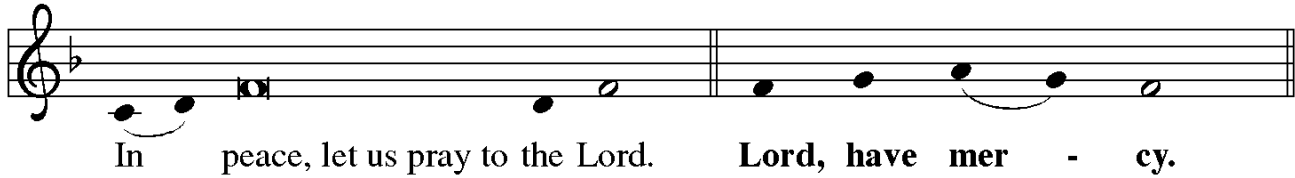


## GREETING

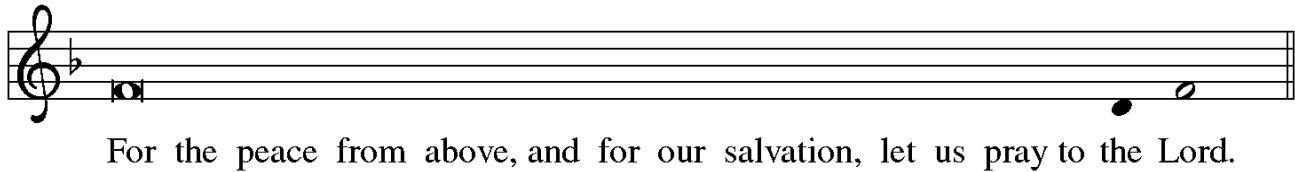
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

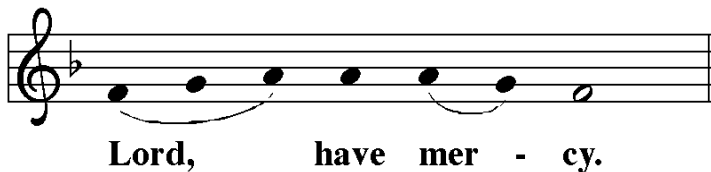
## KYRIE



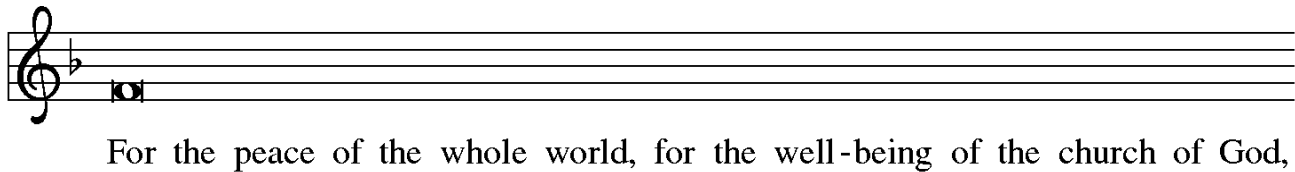
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



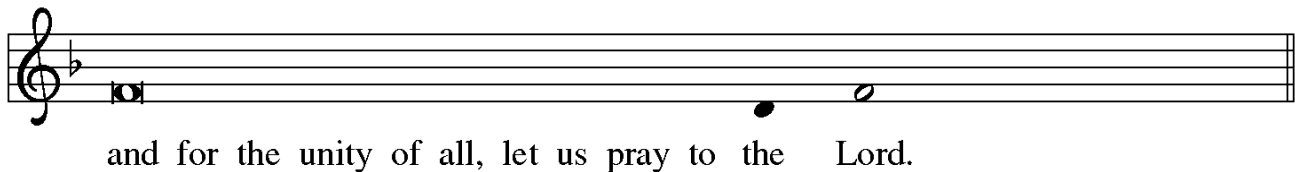
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



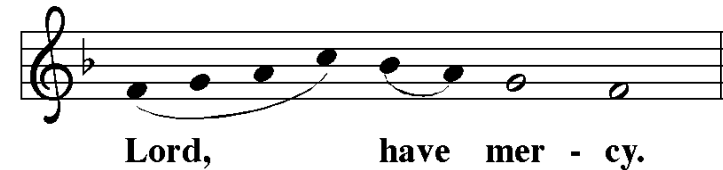
Lord, have mer - cy.



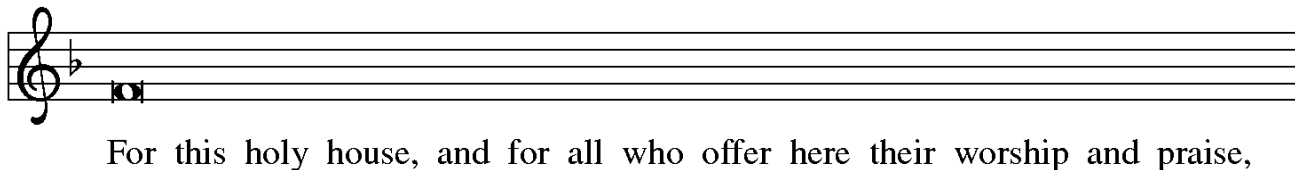
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



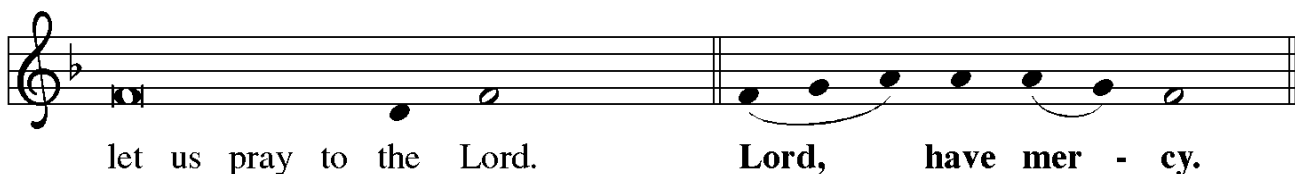
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray, O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## SPECIAL MUSIC

Farther Along

W. B. Stevens  
arr. Judy House

BLC Dulcimers

## **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: Psalm 119: 9-16

<sup>9</sup>How can young people keep their way pure?

By guarding it according to your word.

<sup>10</sup>With my whole heart I seek you;

do not let me stray from your commandments.

<sup>11</sup>I treasure your word in my heart,

so that I may not sin against you.

<sup>12</sup>Blessed are you, O LORD;

teach me your statutes.

<sup>13</sup>With my lips I declare

all the ordinances of your mouth.

<sup>14</sup>I delight in the way of your decrees

as much as in all riches.

<sup>15</sup>I will meditate on your precepts,

and fix my eyes on your ways.

<sup>16</sup>I will delight in your statutes;

I will not forget your word.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and  
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in  
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:15-22

<sup>15</sup>If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. <sup>16</sup>But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup>If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. <sup>18</sup>Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

<sup>21</sup>Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

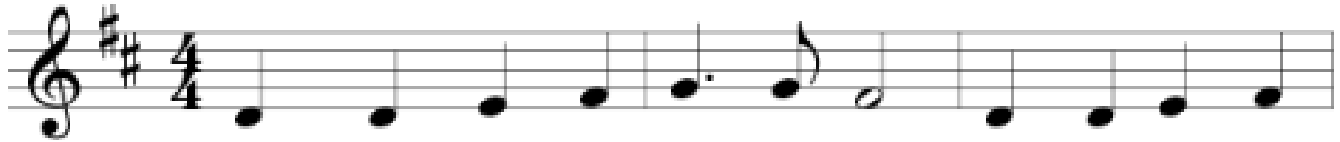
The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

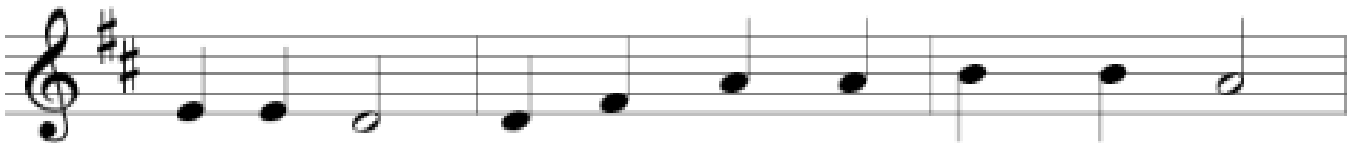
SERMON

## Love Your Neighbor and Forgive

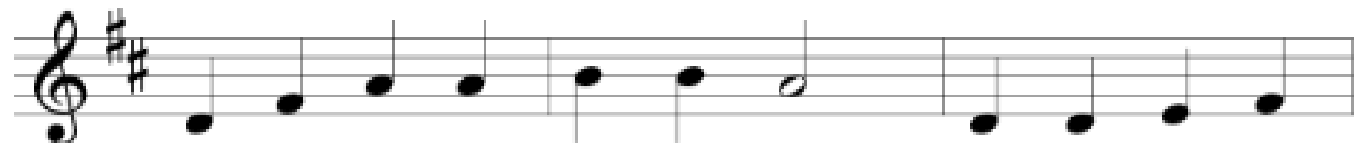
REDHEAD NO. 76 (7.7.7.7.7)



"Love your neigh - bor and for - give" Words so sim - ple  
 Sounds of bombs and bul - lets ring War is all we've  
 Love is ris - ky, peace is faint And for-give - ness



yet so hard We have wounds be - cause we've lived  
 ev - er known Pac - i - fists are framed as weak  
 feels na - ive All are sin - ners, all are saints



Cal - lus - es en - fold our hearts Jes - us reach - es  
 We re - ly on might a - lone Jes - us paves the  
 And we all God's grace re - ceive So we fol - low



out to touch Wounds and hearts that hold too much  
 paths of peace Ev - en as the threats in - crease  
 mer - cy's way Soft - en - ing our hearts to grace

### THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

*A brief silence.*

#1 God of the covenant, through the church you draw us into community. We give thanks for the means of grace around which we gather. Inspire writers, musicians, and artists whose creative gifts adorn our worship. Hear us. O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

#2 God of all that exists, you lavish the earth with extravagant beauty. Preserve the rich and complex diversity of living things. Support local, national, and international efforts to protect the environment for future generations. Hear us. O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

#3 God of good will, you restore what is broken. We pray for any experiencing estrangement, conflict, or abuse in families and intimate relationships. Protect and comfort all who are vulnerable, especially those living in institutions. Hear us. O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We give thanks that in baptism you form us into community. We pray for these members and friends of Bethlehem and their families: Leslie & Mark (Avery, James & Tyler), Bob & Cathy, Bill, Gunnar, and Judy & Mark. We also pray for the ministry of our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. Hear us. O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

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:*

- Ruth E, aunt of Pastor Amy, who died on 3/10
- Paul A, friend of Carla V, who died on 3/6
- Elizabeth W, friend of Jeff and Ruth H, who died on 3/2
- Don G, who died on 3/4
- Barbara C, the mother-in-law of Linda J's daughter, who died 2/28

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

- Daniel D, son of Susie and Dick D, who is recovering from anticipated surgery on 3/12
- Mark L, trombone instructor of James G

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



*Silence for individual prayer.*

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Accompany us through all our wanderings, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**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

Ave Verum

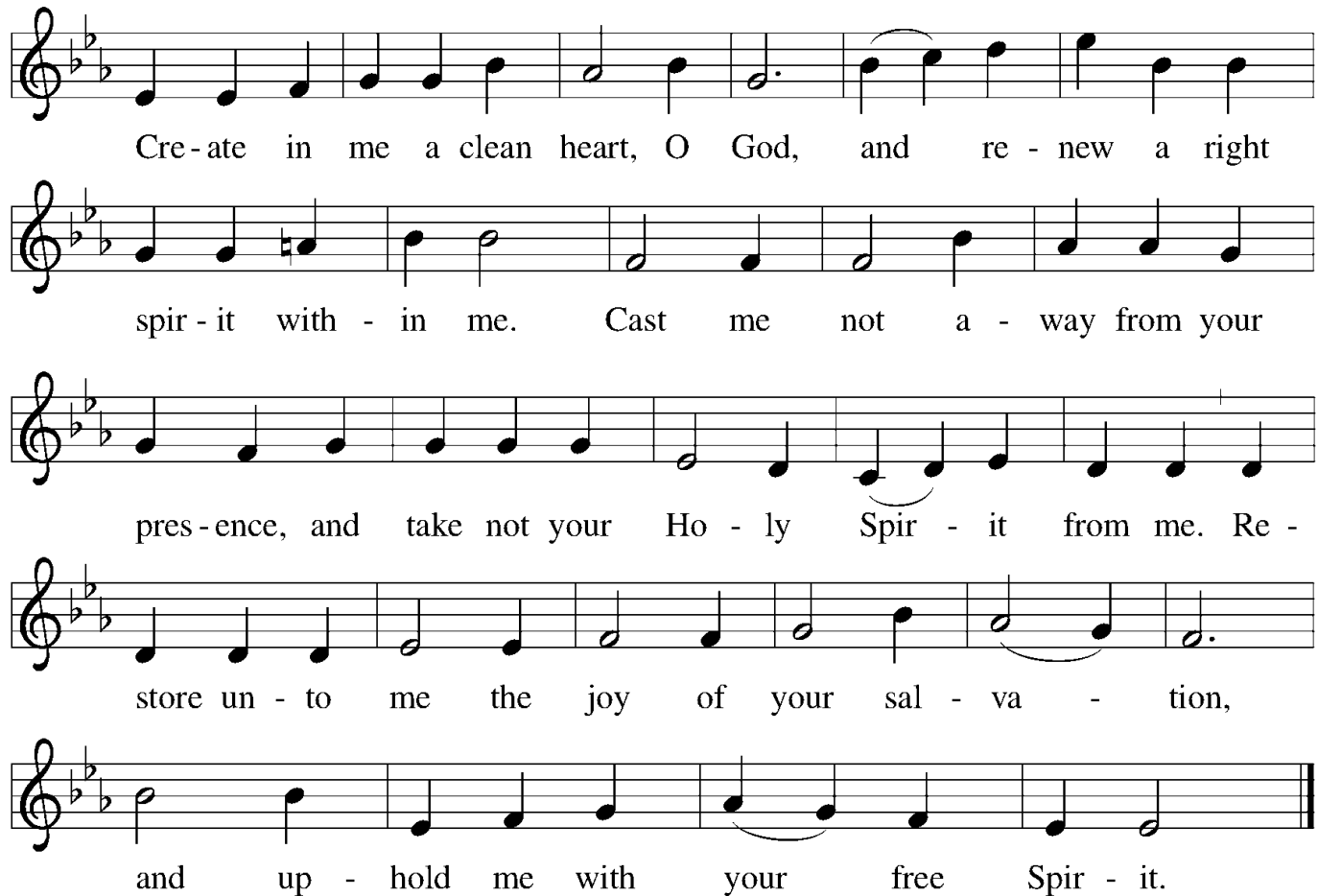
14th-cent. Latin hymn  
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

The Chancel Choir

*English Translation of "Ave Verum"*

Jesu, Word of God Incarnate, of the virgin Mary born,  
On the cross thy sacred body for us men with nails was torn  
Cleanse us, by thy blood and water streaming from thy pierced side;  
Feed us with thy body broken, now in death's agony!

## OFFERTORY



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right  
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your  
pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -  
store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,  
and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. God our provider,  
**you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

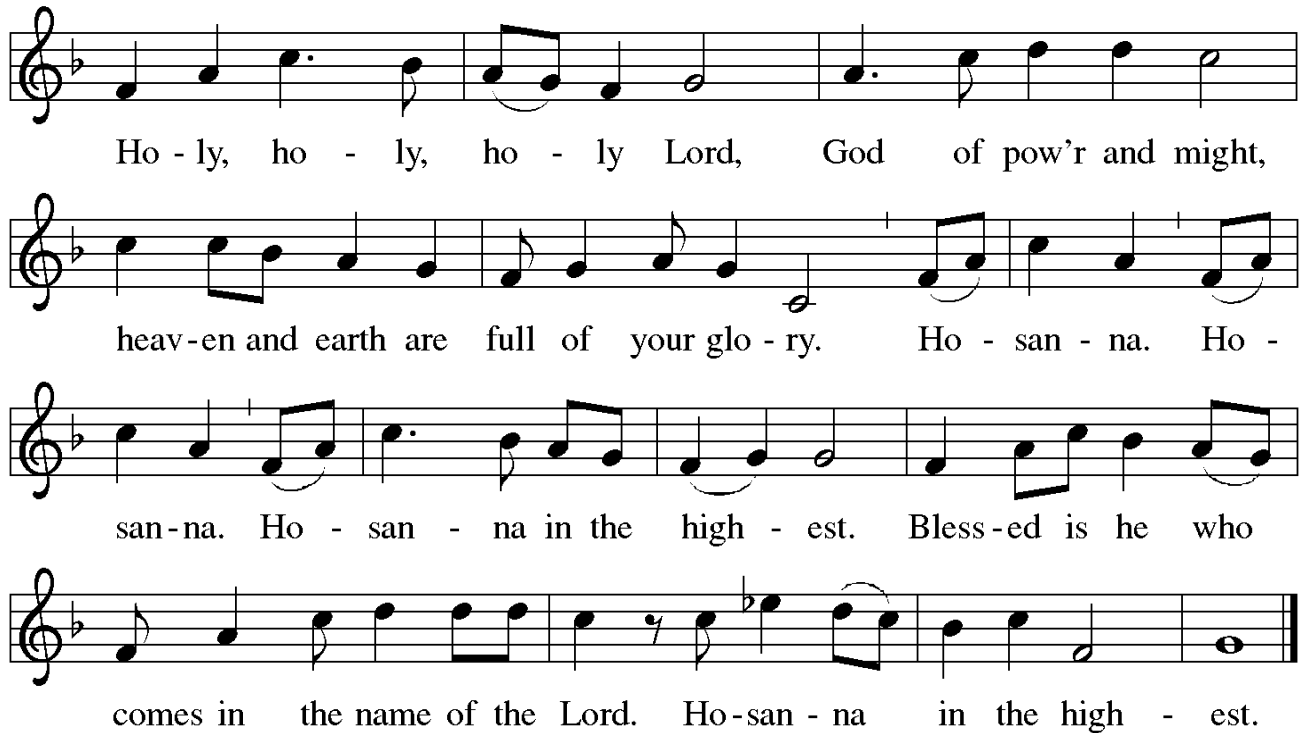
Lift up your hearts.

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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -  
 san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who  
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

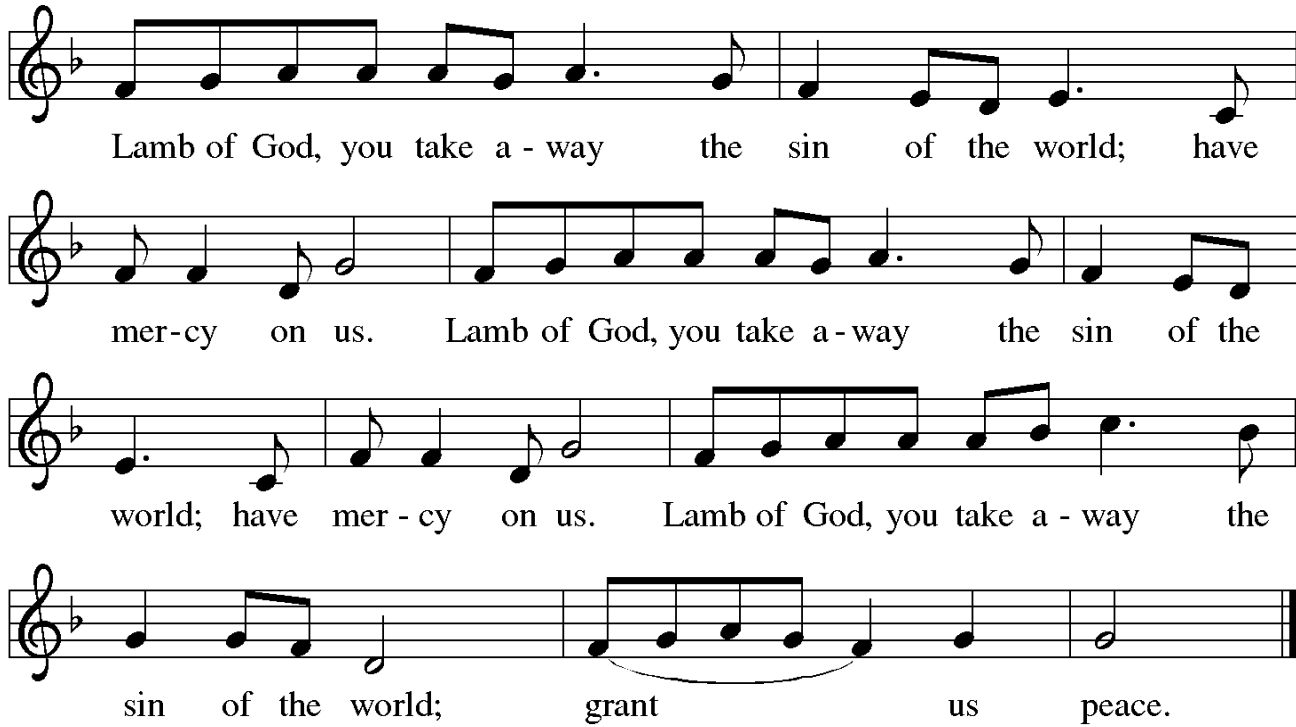
Come! Receive bread for the journey; a feast for wandering hearts.

**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.

## COMMUNION HYMN

Not for Tongues of Heaven's Angels

ACS 1044

# Not for Tongues of Heaven's Angels



1 Not for tongues of heav - en's an - gels, not for wis - dom to dis -  
2 Love is hum - ble, love is gen - tle, love is ten - der, true, and  
3 Nev - er jeal - ous, nev - er self - ish, love will not re - joice in  
4 In the day this world is fad - ing, faith and hope will play their



cern, not for faith that mas - ters moun - tains, for this  
kind; love is gra - cious, ev - er pa - tient, gen - er -  
wrong; nev - er boast - ful nor re - sent - ful, love be -  
part; but when Christ is seen in glo - ry love shall



bet - ter gift we yearn:  
ous of heart and mind: may love be ours, O Lord.  
lieves and suf - fers long:  
reign in ev - 'ry heart:

## COMMUNION HYMN

Forgive Our Sins As We Forgive

ELW 605

## TABLE BLESSING

### POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Generous God, at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace. As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread, now make us one loaf to feed the world; in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.

**Amen.**

## LEAVING TO SERVE

### BENEDICTION

Beloved wanderer, you are called. In the name of † Jesus, you are blessed. In both your ups and your downs, you always belong to God. Go now in peace. Go trusting that good news.

**Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

## POSTLUDE

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

source, John Wyeth, *Repository of Sacred Music* 1813

arr. Terry M. Forsyth

## **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

Additional musical leadership provided by:

Hans Walter-Peterson, cantor

**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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Prelude: Ubi caritas, (Prelude, Meditation, Interlude), Alan Bullard © Oxford University Press 2015

Offering of Music: Ave Verum, Music: W. A. Mozart, ed. Walter S. Collins, © 1981 Hinshaw Music, Inc.

Postlude: Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing, © 2013 Terry M. Forsyth

## About our Theme: Wandering Heart

This Lent, we are focusing on the life and faith of one of Jesus' most famous disciples. In Peter, we see a person who is both steadfast and unsteady, a dear friend and a betrayer, a follower and a wanderer. In Peter, we often see ourselves. By following Peter's journey, we watch the story of Jesus unfold through the eyes of a very normal human trying to figure it all out—just like us.

Each week, a phrase from "*Come, Thou Fount of Ev'ry Blessing*" serves as our theme. It's as if Peter himself wrote this song. As we follow Peter's story, we will sing our way through Lent, binding our wandering hearts to God.

Come, thou Fount of ev'ry blessing, *tune my heart* to sing thy grace;  
*streams of mercy*, never ceasing, call for *songs of loudest praise*.  
*Teach me* some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.  
*Praise the mount—I'm fixed upon it*—mount of God's redeeming love.

Here I raise my Ebenezer: "Hither by thy help I've come";  
*and I hope*, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.  
*Jesus sought me* when a stranger, wand'ring from the fold of God;  
he, to *rescue me from danger*, interposed his precious blood.

Oh, to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be;  
let that grace now like a fetter bind my wand'ring heart to thee.  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; *prone to leave the God I love*.  
*Here's my heart*, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.

(Text: Robert Robinson, 1735-1790)

In this series, we affirm that faith is a constant journey of steadfast pursuit, one that ebbs and flows, seeks and wanders. In Peter's story, we are reminded that God loves imperfect people—in fact, time and again, that's precisely who God claims and calls.