

**Wandering
Heart** 
*"Songs of
loudest praise"*

*Sunday, March 24, 2024
Palm/Passion Sunday*



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, March 24, 2024 ~ *Palm/Passion Sunday*

PRELUDE

Allein zu dir Herr Jesu Christ
(Alone to thee, Lord Jesus Christ)

Johann Christoph Bach

ELLACOMBE

(O Christ, Your Heart, Compassionate)

18th-cent. German melody
setting, Robert J. Powell

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today, we encounter the paradox that defines our faith: Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant. We too are full of paradox: like Peter, we fervently desire to follow Christ, but find ourselves afraid, denying God. We wave palms in celebration today as Christ comes into our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. We begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Sing Hosanna to the King

Victor C. Johnson

OPENING LITANY

Sing songs of loudest praise!

Hosanna!

Sing songs that are unashamed.

Hosanna!

Sing songs without being afraid.

Hosanna!

Sing for the God of tomorrow and today.

Hosanna! We worship the One worthy to be praised.

BLESSING OF THE PALMS

Let us pray. God of grace, your Word is like a song. It is the melody that we long to sing, the refrain that we pray will get stuck in our heads. So as we return to scripture once more, we pray that you would allow us to sink into this song. Allow us to hear the truth in between the words. Allow the cries of the crowd's "hosannas" to feel like our own. Bless these branches and those who carry them. With open hearts and open ears we pray.

Amen.

PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL: John 12:12-16

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹²The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord—the King of Israel!" ¹⁴Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written: ¹⁵"Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!" ¹⁶His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Holy God, we want to run into the streets and sing your praise! We want to be bold and unashamed of this good-news Gospel.

However, too often we find ourselves standing against the wall. Too often we stay quiet.

Too often we let others carry the song.

Forgive us for the moments when we could lead the parade but instead find ourselves standing on the sidelines.

Show us which songs are ours to sing.

Show us which parades are ours to lead, and then give us the courage and conviction to do both. With hope and honesty we pray. Amen.

Friends, no matter where you are on the parade route—whether you are waving palm branches through the streets or standing against the wall, quiet and cautious—Jesus marched for you. Jesus’ love, his striving for justice and mercy, it was for you. You are included in this story and nothing can ever change that.

So hear these words and trust them deep in your bones: We have reason to sing, for Jesus Christ loved you yesterday. Jesus Christ loves you today. And Jesus Christ will love you tomorrow. You are † forgiven, claimed, and sent to serve. Go out and sing. Go out trusting these words.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN	All Glory, Laud, and Honor	ELW 344
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All: *Refrain*

All: sts. 1, 3, 5

Choir: sts. 2, 4

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. Holy God, as we journey through this familiar story, help us to understand it anew. Show us, O God, where we find ourselves in the narrative, and move us toward a more just and compassionate future.

Amen.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PASSION NARRATIVE

HYMN	My Song is Love Unknown	ELW 343 st. 1
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My song is love unknown,
my Savior's love to me,
love to the loveless shown
that they might lovely be.
Oh, who am I that for my sake
my Lord should take frail flesh and die?

LITURGY OF THE PASSION: John 13:1-20, 31-38; 18:1-27; 19:1-30

*Throughout the narrative the congregation reads the **bold text**, sometimes speaking as the Beloved Disciple, sometimes as a bystander, sometimes as the crowd witnessing Jesus' trial, at other times as soldiers. Throughout the reading, consider: which voices relate most directly for you?*

Narrator: Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already decided that Judas son of Simon Iscariot would betray Jesus. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from supper, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him,

Peter: Lord, are you going to wash my feet?

Jesus: You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.

Peter: You will never wash my feet.

Jesus: Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.

Peter: Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!

Jesus: One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.

Narrator: For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, “Not all of you are clean.” After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had reclined again, he said to them,

Jesus: Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, slaves are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But it is to fulfill the scripture, “The one who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.” I tell you this now, before it occurs, so that when it does occur you may believe that I am he. Very truly, I tell you, whoever receives one whom I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.

Narrator: After saying this Jesus was troubled in spirit and declared

Jesus: Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me.

Narrator: The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. One of his disciples—the one whom Jesus loved—was reclining close to his heart; Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him,

Beloved Disciple: Lord, who is it?

Jesus: It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.

Narrator: So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him,

Jesus: Do quickly what you are going to do.

Narrator: Now no one knew why he said this to him. Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the festival,” or that he should give something to the poor. So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night. When he had gone out, Jesus said,

Jesus: Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, “Where I am going, you cannot come.” I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

Narrator: Simon Peter said to him,

Peter: Lord, where are you going?

Jesus: Where I am going, you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward.

Peter: Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.

Jesus: Will you lay down your life for me? Very truly, I tell you, before the cock crows, you will have denied me three times.

He came from his blest throne
salvation to bestow;
the world that was his own
would not its Savior know.
But, oh, my friend, my friend indeed,
who at my need his life did spend!

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

Trusting 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 Blessed One, today the church sings glad hosannas as we enter Holy Week. Prepare us to bear witness to Christ's suffering and death endured for our sake. Gather your people around the cross and comfort us with resurrection hope. In this busy week, give energy and joy to our pastors, worship leaders, and musicians. Watch over those who travel. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

#2 Renew your good creation and protect the balance of life on earth. Encourage the work of foresters, scientists, arborists, gardeners, and river keepers. We pray for the health of pollinating insects, songbirds, and native plants. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

#3 We pray for peace and justice among the nations. Counsel those in authority to find solutions to the many problems that concern us. 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: Ed & Joan, Bob & Cheryl, Penny, Craig & Susan, and Hays & Karen. 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:

- Clarence G, father of David G, who died on 3/18
- Matt B, friend of Chris M, who died on 3/9
- 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

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Jim C, who fractured his foot after a fall at home

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

Silence for individual prayer.

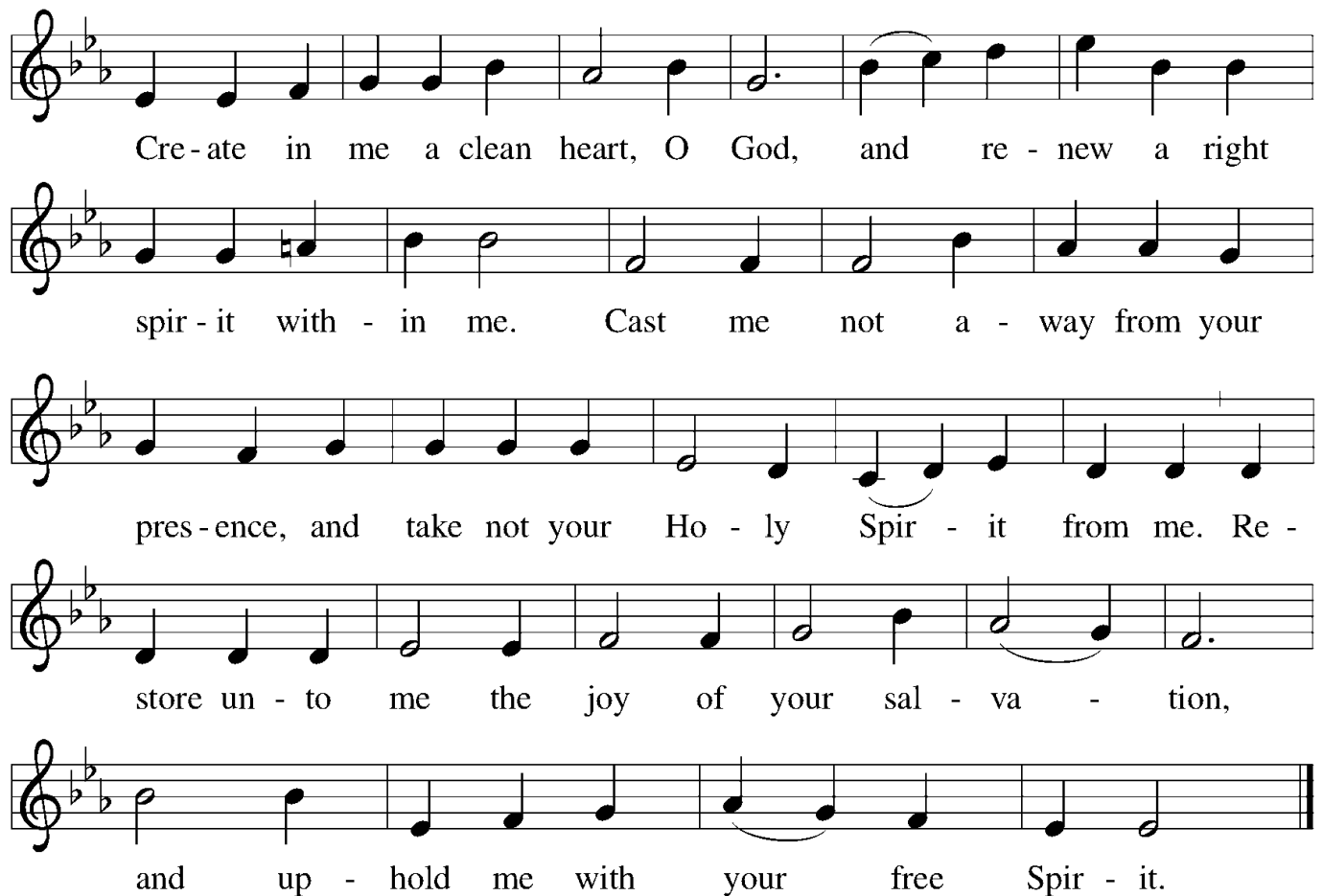
Hear us, O God.

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.

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.

HOLY COMMUNION

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 right to offer thanks and praise to you, O God, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; for after he entered Jerusalem in triumph, and before he suffered and died, he carved a moment away from the pressure of the world to set the table that would draw all people to God.

People of God, hear the words of the holy gospel, according to Matthew.

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never drink again of this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

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

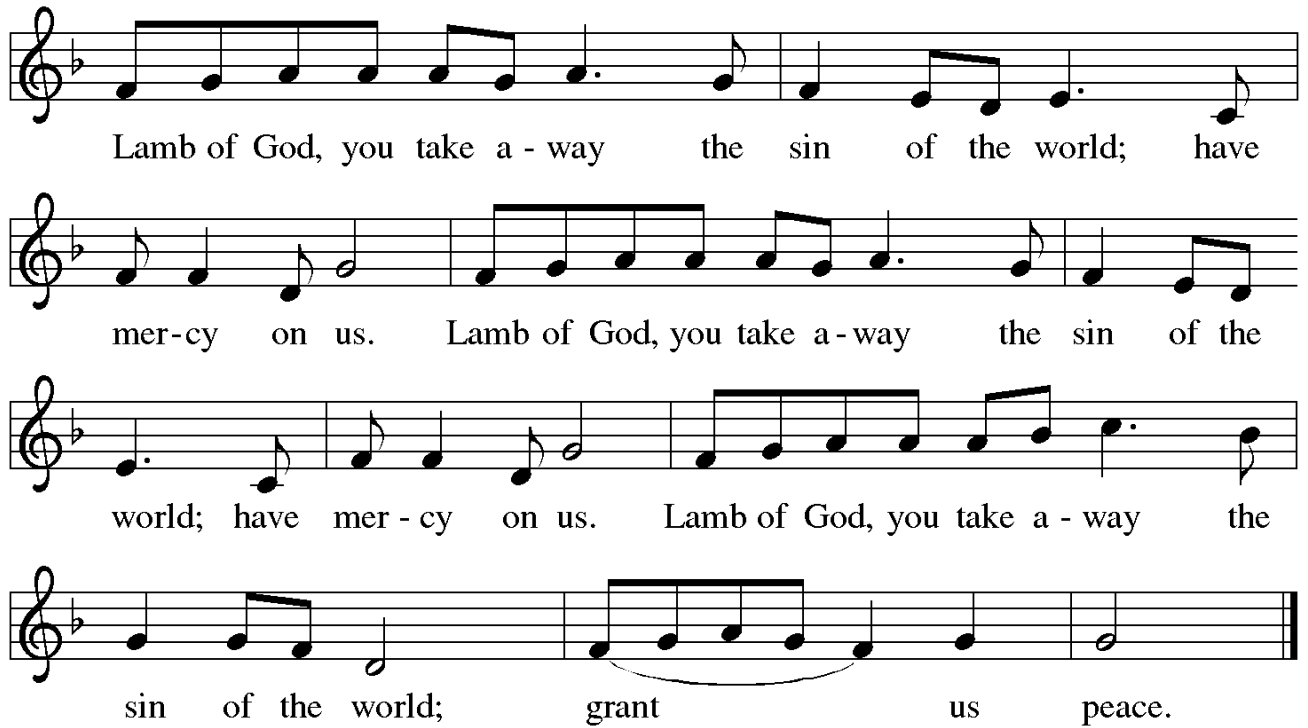
Come! Receive bread for the journey; a feast for wandering hearts.

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 HYMNS

Around You, O Lord Jesus

ELW 468

Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross

ELW 335

Narrator: After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them,

Jesus: Whom are you looking for?

Chief Priests and Pharisees: Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus: I am he.

Narrator: Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them,

Jesus: Whom are you looking for?

Chief Priests and Pharisees: Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus: I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these people go.

Narrator: This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, “I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.” Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave’s name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter,

Jesus: Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?

Narrator: So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jewish leaders that it was better to have one person die for the people. Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. The woman said to Peter,

Women: You are not also one of this man’s disciples, are you?

Peter: I am not.

Narrator: Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

Narrator: Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus answered,

Jesus: I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said.

Narrator: When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying,

Officer: Is that how you answer the high priest?

Jesus: If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?

Narrator: Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him,

Crowd: You are not also one of his disciples, are you?

Narrator: He denied it and said,

Peter: I am not.

Narrator: One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked,

Men: Did I not see you in the garden with him?

Narrator: Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

OFFERING OF MUSIC

Lest We Forget

words, Mary Kay Beall
music, Charles Yannerella

The Chancel Choir

Narrator: Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them,

Pilate: Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him.

Narrator: So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them,

Pilate: Behold the man!

Narrator: When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted,

Chief Priests and police: Crucify him! Crucify him!

Pilate: Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him."

Jewish Leaders: We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God.

Narrator: Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus,

Pilate: Where are you from?

Narrator: But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him,

Pilate: Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you and power to crucify you?

Jesus: You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.

Narrator: From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out

Jewish People: If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against Caesar.

Narrator: When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover, and it was about noon. He said to the Jewish people,

Pilate: Here is your King!

Crowd: Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!

Pilate: Shall I crucify your King?

Narrator: The chief priests answered,

Chief priests: We have no king but Caesar.

Narrator: Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

HYMN	My Song is Love Unknown	ELW 343 st. 3
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Sometimes we strew his way
and his sweet praises sing;
resounding all the day
hosannas to our king.
Then "Crucify!" is all our breath,
and for his death we thirst and cry.

Narrator: So they took Jesus, and carrying the cross by himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate,

Chief priests: Do not write, “The King of the Jews,” but, “This man said, I am King of the Jews.”

Pilate: What I have written I have written.

Narrator: When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another,

Soldiers: Let us not tear it but cast lots for it to see who will get it.

Narrator: This was to fulfill what the scripture says, “They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.” And that is what the soldiers did. Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother,

Jesus: Woman, here is your son.

Narrator: Then he said to the disciple,

Jesus: Here is your mother.

Narrator: And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture),

Jesus: I am thirsty.

Narrator: A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said,

Jesus: It is finished.

Narrator: Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Here might I stay and sing—
no story so divine!
Never was love, dear King,
never was grief like thine.
This is my friend, in whose sweet praise
I all my days could gladly spend!

Brief Silence

CLOSING PRAYER

On the cross Jesus confronted our misery and carried our guilt.
He carried our death to his grave but all still grieve, all still weep, and all still die.
Let us pray.

**Do not turn your face from us, O God,
and hear us when we pray.
Raise the dying, O Jesus,
and heal all the sick.
Comfort the restless, O Holy Spirit,
and share your welcome with the wandering.
Forgive us for our sins.
Take our death to your grave so dying, we might live. Amen**

BENEDICTION

You came in celebration. you leave in solemnity. Carry the song of God's love made known in † Jesus burning deep in your wandering heart.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN	There in God's Garden	ELW 342
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SENDING

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Fuga Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy

from Organ Sonata VI in D Minor, op. 65

“Vater unser im Himmelreich” (Our Father in Heaven)

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:

BLC Children's Choir

The Chancel Bells

Michael Koncilja, piano

Vocal Quartet: Sarah Morrissette, Kathy Moragne, Dave Wideman, Neil Vokes

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? Fill out the survey on the table in the narthex and place it in the basket or speak with a pastor.

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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(Adapted by Pastor Amy Walter-Peterson and Pastor Abigail Hoffman.)

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Organ Sonata VI, op. 65: Music: Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy © 1990 Novello & Company Limited

Holy Week and Easter

During Holy Week we follow Jesus' journey from his triumphal entry into the city to a desolate cross to an empty tomb.

Maundy Thursday, March 28

Noon (in person and livestream) – Individual Absolution and Holy Communion in the Sanctuary

6 pm – *New format and time!* – Remembering Jesus' last supper with his disciples, we will begin worship with a shared meal around tables in the Fellowship Hall and end in silence in the sanctuary after the altar is stripped

Good Friday, March 29 at 7 pm (in person and livestream)

**Easter Sunday, March 31 at 8:55 am (in person and livestream)
and 11 am (in person only)**

Pancake Breakfast served 9:45-10:45 am

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.