

Abide in my love

JOHN 15:9



*Sunday, May 5, 2024
Sixth Sunday of Easter*



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 5, 2024 ~ *Sixth Sunday of Easter*

PRELUDE

Draw Us to You

(ACH GOTT UND HERR)

tune, attr. Christoph Peter
setting, Michael Burkhardt

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This Sunday's image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. We are called to serve others as Jesus came to serve; but for John's gospel, the image of servanthood is too hierarchical, too distant, to capture the essence of life with Christ. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us. The Greeks believed that true friends are willing to die for each other. This is the mutual love of Christian community commanded by Christ and enabled by the Spirit.

GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP (Adapted from Psalm 98)

O sing to the LORD a new song

God has done marvelous things!

The LORD has made known his victory.

All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;

break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

GATHERING HYMN	Christ Is Risen! Shout Hosanna!	WOV 672
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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



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



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb



who was slain, whose blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.

Refrain



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



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 2 Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and

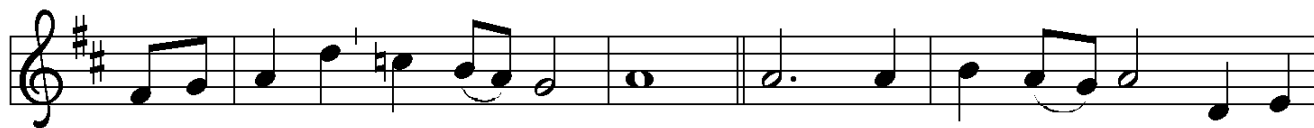


strength, and hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his.

Refrain



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



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of



God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,

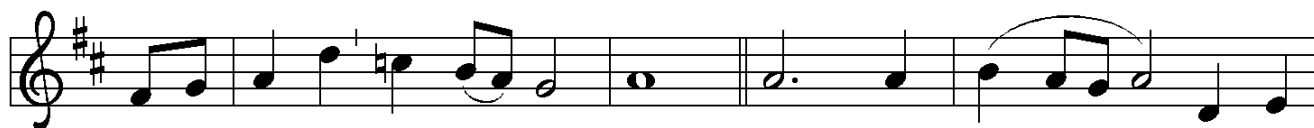


glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Refrain



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



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 4 For the Lamb who was



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

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God.



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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond understanding. Pour into our hearts such love for you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises, which exceed all we can desire; 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

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: Acts 10:44-48

While Peter shares the good news of Jesus with a Gentile soldier and his family, the Holy Spirit comes upon them. Recognizing that the Spirit works inclusively in the lives of both Jews and Gentiles, Peter commands that these Gentiles also be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

⁴⁴While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. ⁴⁵The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, ⁴⁶for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, ⁴⁷“Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” ⁴⁸So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

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. Al - le - lu - ia.

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: John 15:9-17

On the night of his arrest, Jesus delivers a final testimony to his disciples to help them in the days ahead. Here, he repeats the most important of all his commands, that they love one another.

[Jesus said:] ⁹“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

¹²“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. ¹⁷I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY	I Come with Joy	ELW 482
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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.

Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.

A brief silence.

1. Your Holy Spirit falls upon all who hear the word. Fill your church with the gifts of your Spirit and give understanding hearts to those who strengthen our commitments with our ecumenical and interreligious partners. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**
2. You speak and the face of the earth is renewed. Revive your creation, that habitats and every kind of living thing might flourish. Protect endangered species and help us to care for all your creatures. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

3. Your world is divided and the nations rage. The rage has infected relationships among families and neighbors. Grant wisdom and vision to world leaders and relationships of all kinds, that they may seek justice, peace, and the good of all. Strengthen partnerships and cooperations in all relationships. Oh God, Almighty, we pray for peace. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, you make all things new. Strengthen and renew the relationships we share with these members and friends of Bethlehem and their families: David & Susan, Bob & Joyce, Eric & Liana, Gary & Paula, and Jeff & Julie. Bring new life and growth to the ministry of our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Your children are in need. Comfort all those who suffer, especially those afflicted by anxiety, depression, and mental illness. Help us to be conduits of your love in our care for one another.

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

- Michael S, nephew of Jeff D, who died on April 19

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Volker H as he transitions to living at the Presbyterian Home in Rochester

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

Silence for individual prayer.

God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Your work is done in this place with our hands. Bless the ministries of this congregation that we may embody your love for the world. Inspire those who plan and lead worship, council members, committee members, and volunteers. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living 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

Abide with Me

(EVENTIDE)

text, Henry F. Lyte

tune, William H. Monk / arr. Brian L. Hanson

The Chancel Choir

OFFERTORY



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



bles - sing. 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 the dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your



pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Risen One,

you call us to believe and bear fruit. May the gifts that we offer here be signs of your abiding love. Form us to be your witnesses in the world, through Jesus Christ, our true vine. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

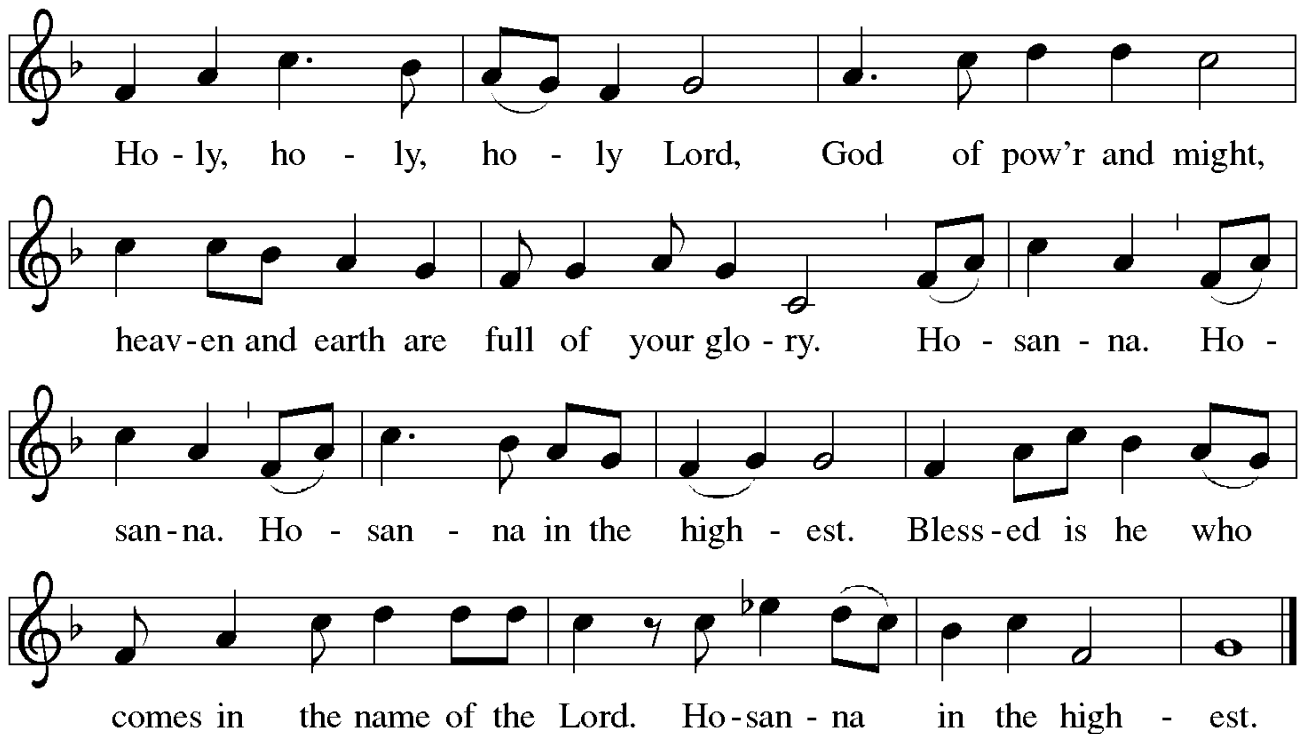
Lift up your hearts.

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

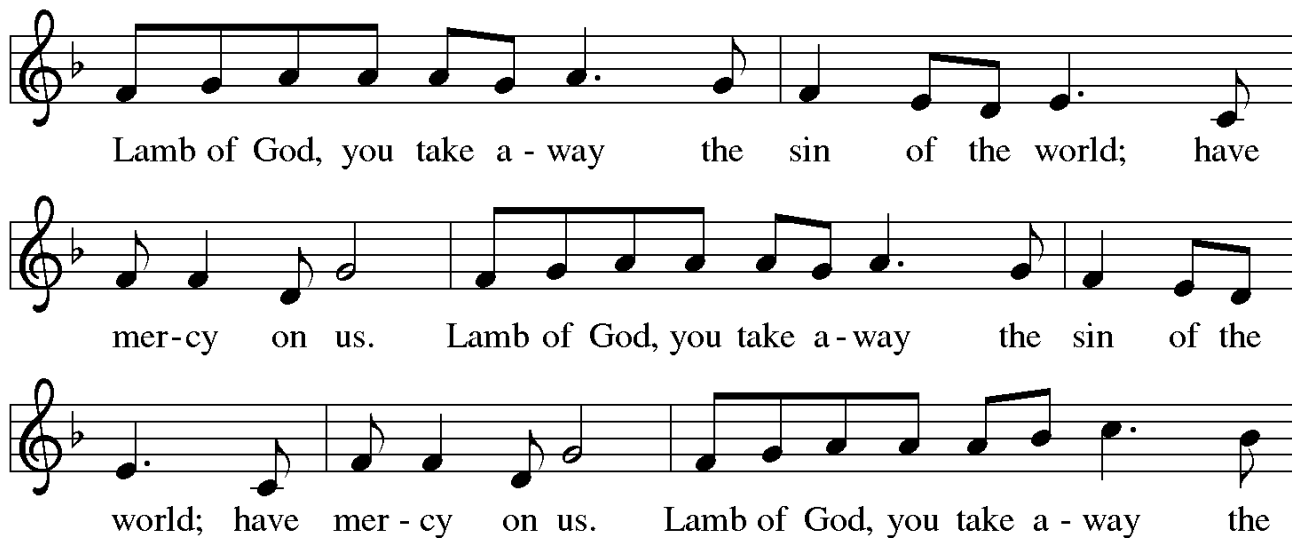
The risen Christ is made known to us in the breaking of the bread. Come and eat.

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
 A Song of Unity W&P 1

Cantor: st. 1
 All: sts. 2, 1

A Song of Unity

As a moth - er hen gath - ers her chicks, as an ea - gle
 lifts up her young, you have called to your ta - ble all
 peo - ple as one; God, we thank you for your pres - ence here. *Fine*
 As we share in the bread and the wine, come to us, ho - ly
 Je - sus, in love. Let the gift of your sac - ri - fice
 o - pen our eyes; we are one in your bo - dy and blood. *D.C. al fine*

COMMUNION HYMN
 Great God, Your Love Has Called Us ELW 358

TABLE BLESSING

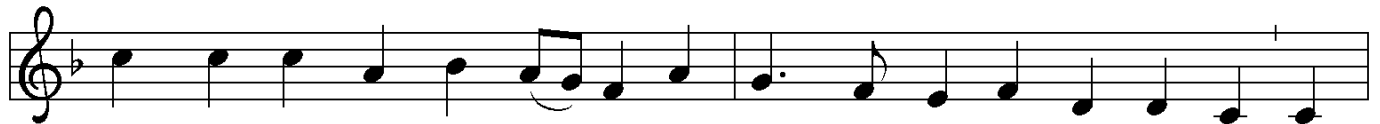
POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



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 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

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The God of resurrection power, the Christ of unending joy, and the Spirit of Easter hope ✠ bless you now and always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

In Christ There Is No East or West

ELW 650

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Go in peace!

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Concluding Voluntary

R. G. Thompson

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:

Kathy Moragne, 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.

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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Invited into Friendship

Ask any child who has moved to a new place and they will probably confirm that their biggest worry was if they'd make new friends. Parents worry for their teenager and young adult in each stage of growth, wondering if new friends will be kind and generous, if their daughter or son will find mutually beneficial relationships. Adults are not immune from their own relationship trials. Busy lives, competing priorities, transitions and death can mean the end of sustaining relationships. Bullying, fear-tactics and misuse of others are common problems, so friendship is precious. We treasure new friendships and work to keep tending those that last for many years—because we need them.

Today's readings inspire and compel us to love one another and see one another as God does. As the Holy Spirit falls on those outside the inner circle of the circumcised, Peter asks how the water of baptism can be withheld. In 1 John we hear that those who love the parent love the child. Jesus says followers are no longer servants but friends. So whether they are a stranger with different customs and practices, our family member, or closest friend, we are called today with the challenge and opportunity to love them. The promise is that this unconditional love that comes first from our Creator and Parent, expressed through the person of Jesus and through the Spirit, is splashed all over us, and will make our joy complete.

For those who have experienced great relationships in their lives and for those who have never yet quite tasted that sustaining fruit, Jesus shows how much he loves us and the ways to cultivate deeper relationships. Jesus laid down his life to show his great love. We're invited to love expansively and experience the joy of friendship with Jesus and through the body of Christ.