

Whoever
welcomes
one such child
in my name
welcomes me

MARK 9:37



Sunday, September 22, 2024
17th Sunday after Pentecost



BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN CHURCH

48 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY ~ (585) 223-0634 ~ www.blcfairport.org

PRELUDE

Hope of the World
(DONNE SECOURS)

Genevan Psalter, 1551
setting, Jeffrey Blersch

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today we hear the disciples quarrel over which one of them is the greatest. Jesus tells them the way to be great is to serve. Then, to make it concrete, he puts in front of them a flesh-and-blood child. We are called to welcome the children God puts in front of us, to make room for them in daily interaction, and to give them a place of honor in the assembly.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

All Are Welcome

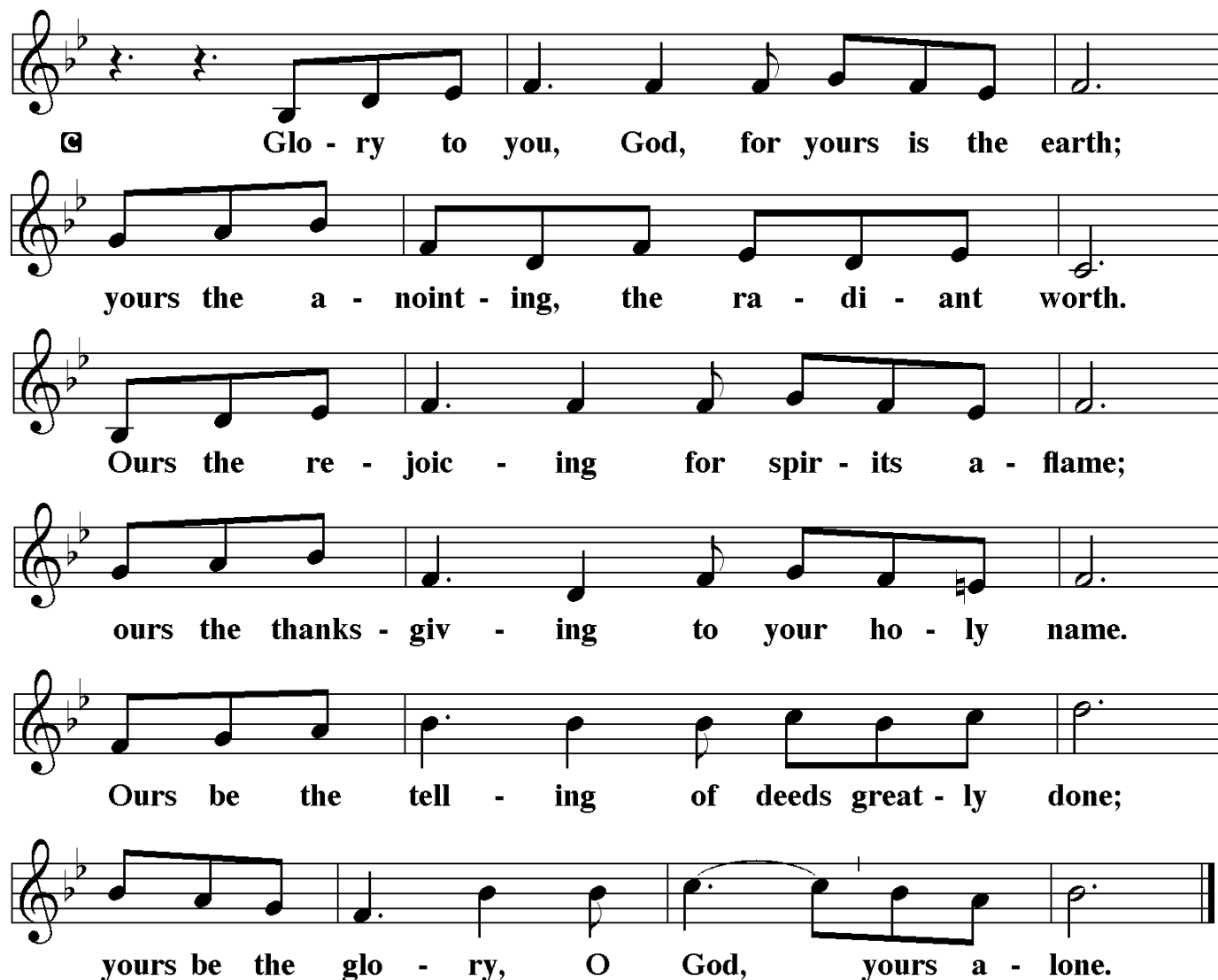
ELW 641

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



G Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
yours the a - noint - ing, the ra - di - ant worth.
Ours the re - joic - ing for spir - its a - flame;
ours the thanks - giv - ing to your ho - ly name.
Ours be the tell - ing of deeds great - ly done;
yours be the glo - ry, O God, yours a - lone.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O God, our teacher and guide, you draw us to yourself and welcome us as beloved children. Help us to lay aside all envy and selfish ambition, that we may walk in your ways of wisdom and understanding as servants of your Son, 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: Psalm 54

The Psalm is read responsively.

¹Save me, O God, by your name,
and vindicate me by your might.

**²Hear my prayer, O God;
give ear to the words of my mouth.**

³For the insolent have risen against me,
the ruthless seek my life;
they do not set God before them.

**⁴But surely, God is my helper;
the LORD is the upholder of my life.**

⁵He will repay my enemies for their evil.
In your faithfulness, put an end to them.

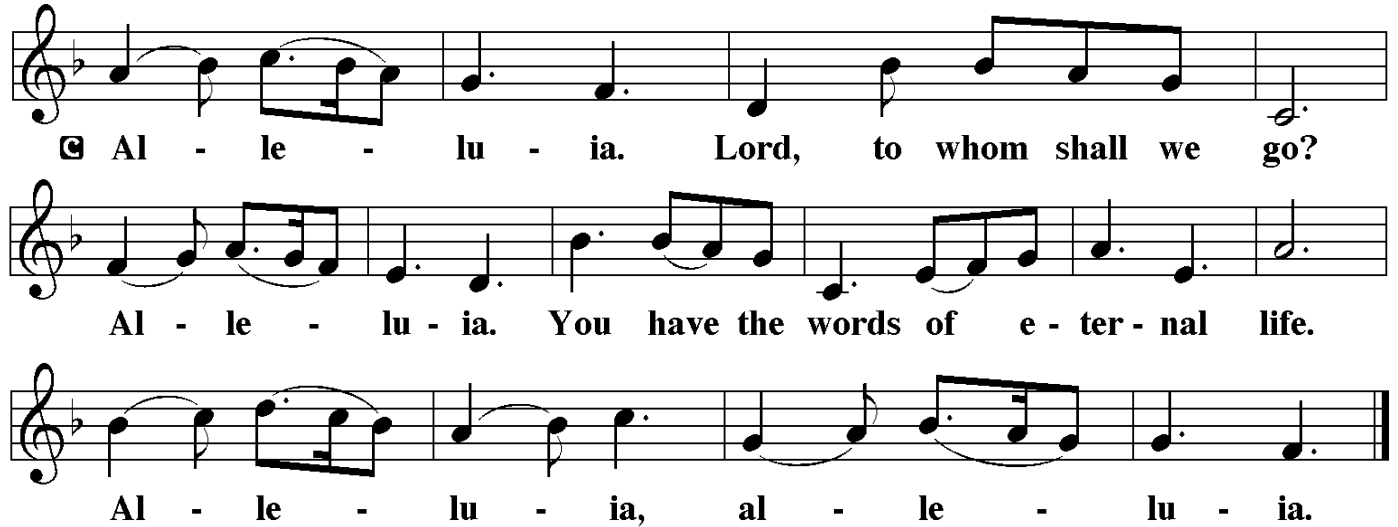
**⁶With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you;
I will give thanks to your name, O LORD, for it is good.**

⁷For he has delivered me from every trouble,
and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies..

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 Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Mark 9:30-37

Jesus' teaching and action in this text are directed to the church whenever it is seduced by the world's definition of greatness: prestige, power, influence, and money. The antidote to such a concern for greatness is servanthood.

³⁰[Jesus and the disciples went on] and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it,³¹ for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again."³² But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

³³Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?"³⁴ But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest.³⁵ He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all."³⁶ Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them,³⁷ "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY	God, We Gather As Your People	ACS 1038
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Choir: stanza 1/Refrain

All: st. 2/Ref. st. 3/Ref. st.4/Ref.

God, We Gather As Your People



1 God, we gath - er as your peo - ple to raise our song a -
2 Oh, we sing for all the chil - dren, that one day they be
3 Oh, we pray for all the young lives cut short by fear and
4 God, we're work - ing for the fu - ture when chil - dren far and



bove, and we dare to claim the prom - ise of your love.
free; and we sing for gen - er - a - tions yet to be,
shame, so a - fraid of who they are and whom they love.
wide can . . . live their lives with dig - ni - ty and pride.



Though the day may not yet be here, we
that they nev - er have a rea - son to
May the mes - sage now be ban - ished that your
As they grow in strength and stat - ure, may they



trust it soon will be, when your chil - dren will be free.
doubt that they are blest. May they, in your love, find rest.
love is for the few; may their faith in you re - new.
join us hand in hand, as a - gainst all hate we stand.

Refrain

Oh, may our hearts and minds be o-pened, fling the church doors o-pen
 wide. May there be room e-nough for ev-'ry-one in - side.
 For in God there is a wel - come, in God we all be -
 long. May that wel - come be our song.

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.

Drawn together in the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray with confidence for the church, God's good creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

#1 Loving God, you welcome all at your table of grace. Instill in your church a spirit of humility and curiosity, that we embrace all who seek you. We pray especially for ministries of hospitality and faith formation. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

#2 Gracious God, your peace brings justice and solidarity. Encourage peace among peoples, tribes, and nations; heal divisions in our country and local communities, that together we might cooperate for the good of all. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

#3 Transforming God, you accompany all through changes and transitions. Help us to see where you are calling this community to new ways of living the gospel promise; assure us that even as change brings loss, it also brings hope and life. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Gracious God, your Son, Jesus, blessed children and called us to be like them. Help us to better know and care for these children, youth and young adults: Anna, Annika, Antonio, Autumn, and Avery. Strengthen the connections we share with the ministries we serve, especially the ministry of our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Gracious God, you are near to all who call upon you.

We lift up prayers of thanksgiving for:

- Allison W and Michael M married at Bethlehem on 9/21
- Albert Clark, son of Lindsey and Ben E and grandson of Brian and Bev E, born on 9/7

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

- Morey R who died on 9/10
- Richard M, father of Dave M, who died on 9/4

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Cathy A who has been hospitalized at Strong following a heart attack
- Benjamin B, grandson of Toni T, who is recovering from a car accident on 9/10
- Bill A who is hospitalized at Strong
- Ros. S who is recovering from anticipated shoulder surgery on 9/19
- Lisa R who is recovering from surgery on 9/16

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.

We entrust these and all our prayers to you, holy God, in the name of your beloved child, 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

Thank you for your offerings that support the ongoing ministry that we share. 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 or scan the QR (quick response) code on the right and you'll be brought to BLC's mobile giving page.

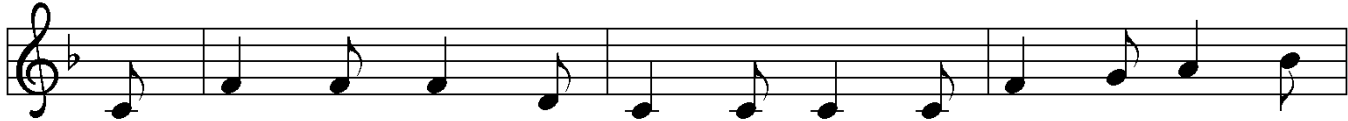


OFFERING OF MUSIC

Forever Blest Is He

tune, George F. Handel
text / setting, Royal Stanton

OFFERTORY



1 I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and
2 I come with Chris - tians far and near to find, as all are



free, the life of Je - sus to re - call in
fed, the new com - mu - ni - ty of love in



love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.
Christ's com - mu - nion bread, in Christ's com - mu - nion bread.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Blessed are you, O God,
**source of every gift of your creation. By these gifts and with our lives, help us
to serve one another and all in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and
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.

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:

**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

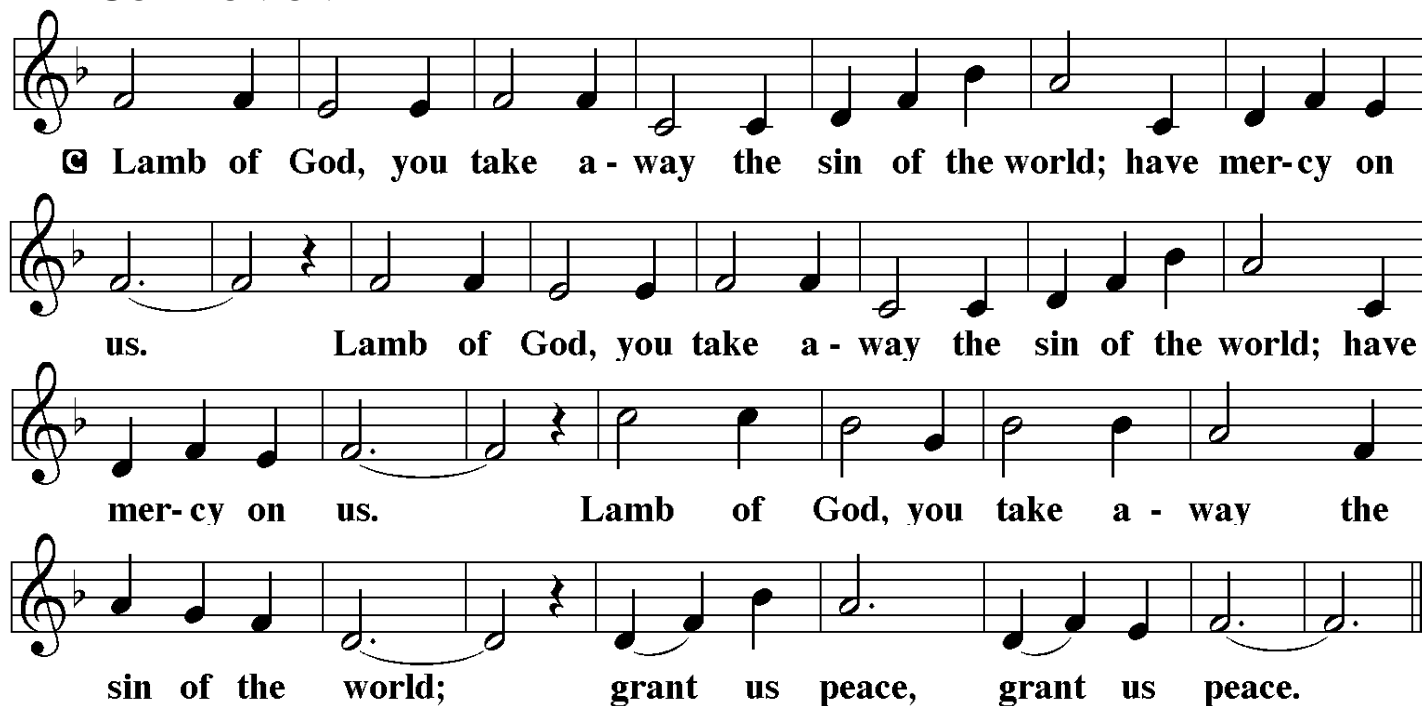
Jesus welcomes you to this table. Come, eat and live.

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.

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

Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth

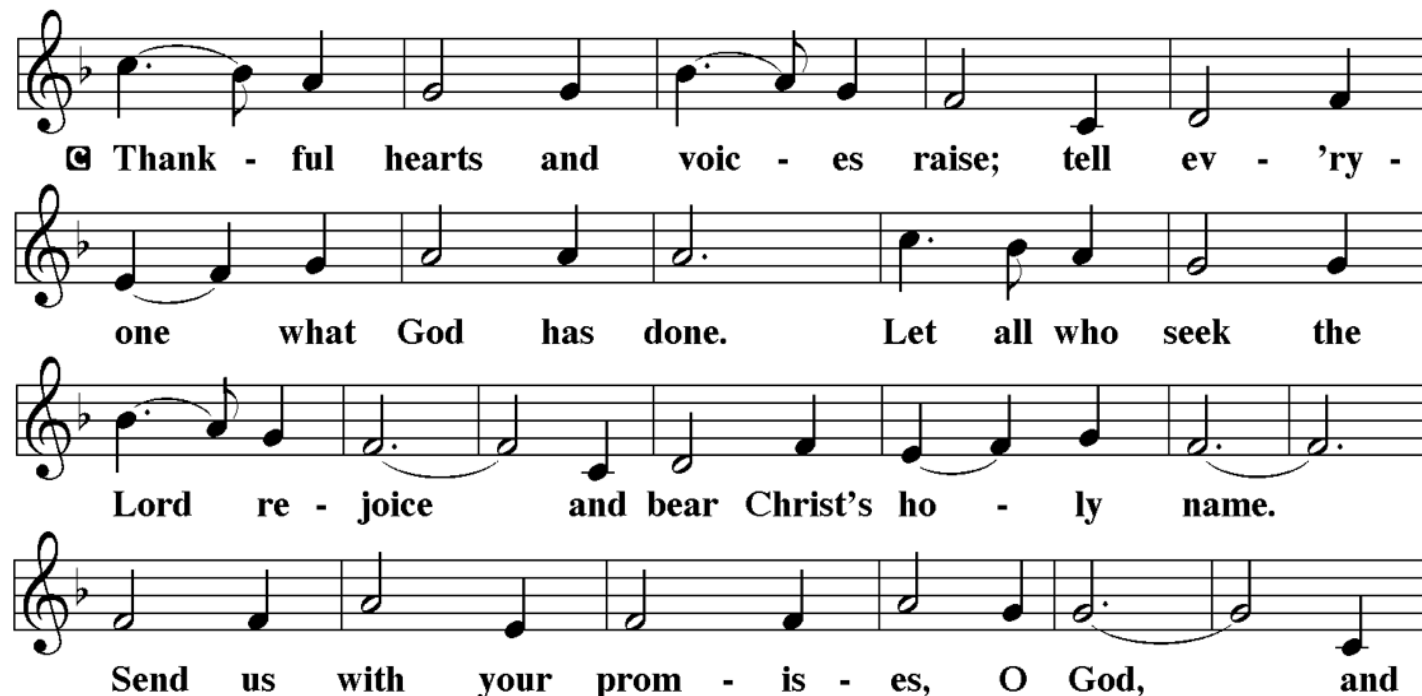
ELW 735

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service

ELW 712

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 thanksgiving. Alleluia.

LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

The blessing of God, whose teaching is life, whose presence is sure, and whose love is endless ☩ be upon you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN	Go, My Children, with My Blessing	ELW 543
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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Follow Jesus.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Sent Forth by God's Blessing
(THE ASH GROVE)

Welsh folk tune
setting, Paul R. Otte

BLC Pastors

The Rev. Abigail Zang Hoffman and The Rev. Amy Walter-Peterson, co-Pastors

BLC Musicians

Raelynn Clare, Music Director and Organist

Chrisanne Gates, Chancel Choir Director

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 one of the pastors following worship or send an email to volunteersupport@blcfairport.org and we'll follow up!

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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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.
"God We Gather As Your People" Text: David Lohman, b. 1961; Music: WELCOME BE OUR SONG, David Lohman
Text and music © 2007 Welcome Song Music, admin. Augsburg Fortress
"Hope of the World" Tune: Donne Secours; *Trente quarte pseumes de David*, Geneva, 1551; Arranger: Jeffrey Blersch
© 2007 Concordia Publishing House
"Forever Blest Is He" Text: Royal Stanton; Tune: George F. Handel; Arranger: Royal Stanton
©1974, Harold Flammer, Inc (adm. Shawnee Press, Inc.)
"Sent Forth by God's Blessing" Tune: The Ash Grove; Arranger: Paul R. Otte © 1987 Belwin Mills Publishing Corp.

Evergreen East Produce Distribution

BLC is giving away produce in partnership with Moll Farms each Wednesday

4:45pm sort/ package items at BLC

5:30pm distribute at the Pines



Hat Ministry

Knit, crochet, loom made, or store purchased are all appreciated. Yarn & patterns available in Narthex or use your own.

Please find donation bins in the Narthex.



Altar Flowers

Order by calling the church office at 223-0634 or order online here:



between sundays 



Find episodes of our podcast here! 

The Most Challenging Spiritual Practice

The writers of today's readings express to God their fears about death and those who do evil. They rage against the cravings, coveting, envy, and selfish ambition that lead to disorder and war, within and around us. They describe one caught in this reality who is led to slaughter, tested with insult and torture, and faces a shameful death. Through our lenses we see Jesus. In fact, Jesus keeps describing what is going to happen to him, but his followers can't understand. They don't want to understand. Instead, they argue about who is greatest. Putting a quick end to that line of argument, Jesus brings a child into their circle. Embracing the child, Jesus invites disciples into humble service—this is how we draw near to God and God to us.

It is easy to be fearful in view of events outside us. It is easy to be thrown off course by feelings inside us or to work hardest for the wrong things. But Jesus invites us to practice what may be the most challenging spiritual practice of all. Jesus invites us to love our neighbor. Jesus asks that we look around for someone concrete to invest our time and energy in, someone who cannot necessarily return the favor. Jesus challenges us to receive others' ministry to us, since we are also little children in faith.

In real life, there is no way to avoid shame and death. At some point, it comes to each of us. However, for now, wherever we are, we can participate in God's way of life. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, disciples look where Jesus points and see those whom they can serve. They do not escape death but can know that resurrection is on the other side. Each day, God is with us through dying and rising.