



*Words for the Beginning  
Praise and Worship  
Sunday, November 10, 2024*



BETHLEHEM  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

48 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY ~ (585) 223-0634 ~ [www.blcfairport.org](http://www.blcfairport.org)



## **PRELUDE**

Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele, op. 122, no. 5  
(Deck Thyself, My Soul, with Gladness)

Johannes Brahms

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Advent is a season of endings and beginnings. As the calendar year comes to a close, a new church year rushes in. Christ's birth ushers us into new ways of living and loving—and yet, we feel the weight of many things coming to an end. The world as we know it spins madly on. As we move through new chapters, may these words for the beginning renew us and remind us of the ways we are called to live out our faith. No matter what you are facing, no matter what this new day brings, let love be your beginning.*

## **GATHERING**

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, our refuge, our delight, our beginning and our end.

**Amen.**

Let us come in truth before the one who loves us and has freed us from our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Eternal One, robed in majesty and mercy,  
**we confess that sin has taken hold of us and we are complicit in its power. We are disturbed in spirit and our hearts cannot rest. Unbind us and set us free. Lead us again to the waters of rebirth, that we may live just and generous lives for the good of your world and the care of our neighbors, following in the servant way of Jesus. Amen.**

These words are trustworthy and true: Christ bore our sins once, for all, on the cross, swallowing up death forever. For his sake, you are † forgiven and God remembers your sin no more. Let your heart be glad again, and rejoice in your salvation.

**Amen.**

**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. O God, you show forth your almighty power chiefly by reaching out to us in mercy. Grant us the fullness of your grace, strengthen our trust in your promises, and bring all the world to share in the treasures that come through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

Come, Sing Your Thanks to the Lord  
(Incorp. *Now Thank We All Our God*)

Terry D. Taylor

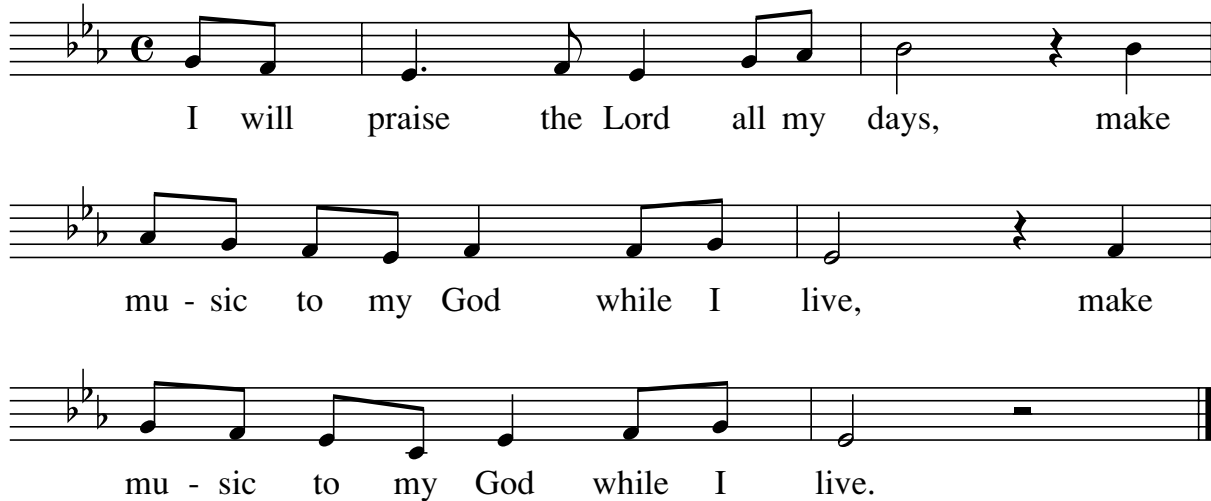
BLC Children's Choir

**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.*

# Psalm 146: I Will Praise the Lord

## Refrain



I will praise the Lord all my days, make  
mu - sic to my God while I live, make  
mu - sic to my God while I live.

## Verses

1. Put no trust in the powerful, mere mortals in whom there is no help.  
Take their breath, they return to clay, and their plans that day come to nothing.  
They are happy who are helped by Jacob's God, whose hope is in the Lord their God,  
who alone made heaven and earth, the seas and all they contain.
2. It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever, who is just to the oppressed.  
It is God who gives bread to the hungry, the Lord, who sets prisoners free.  
It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind, who raises up those who are bowed down,  
the Lord who protects the stranger, and upholds the widow and orphan.
3. It is the Lord who loves the just but thwarts the path of the wicked.  
The Lord will reign for ever, Zion's God from age to age.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



We are called to pon-der mys - t'ry and a-wait the com-ing Christ,



to em-bod-y God's com-pas - sion for each frag - ile hu - man life.



God is with us in our long-ing to bring heal-ing to the earth, while we



watch with joy and wond - der for the prom-ised Sav - ior's birth.

The holy gospel according to Mark.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

## GOSPEL: Mark 12:38-44

*After engaging in a series of public arguments with religious leaders in the temple, Jesus contrasts the proud and oppressive ways of those leaders with the sacrificial humility and poverty of the widow.*

<sup>38</sup> As [Jesus] taught, he said, “Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, <sup>39</sup> and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! <sup>40</sup> They devour widows’ houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.”

<sup>41</sup> He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. <sup>42</sup> A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. <sup>43</sup> Then he called his disciples and said to them, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. <sup>44</sup> For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

When the Poor Ones

ELW 725

### **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 prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

*A brief silence.*

#1 Renew your church, O God. Make us servants to one another for the sake of the gospel. Instill a heart for service and a passion for justice in all of us.  
Lord in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

#2 Renew your creation, O God. Sustain the earth and seas and all that is in them. Kindle in us a reverent awe for all creatures great and small, and strengthen us in our pursuit of climate justice. Lord in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

#3 Renew your people, O God. Protect those in our communities who are vulnerable or ill. Accompany persons who are unemployed or underemployed, children who are in foster care, and those who live alone. Watch over and uphold them. Heal our nation's veterans from the unseen wounds of war. Tend to their trauma and soothe burdened consciences. Guide leaders of the world to end conflicts and pursue peace. Lord in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Gracious God, in this season when we remember that you came to earth as a child, help us to better know and care for these children, youth and young adults: Hazel, Isabel, Ivy, James, Jared, and Jillian. Strengthen the connections we share with the ministries we serve, especially the ministry of our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. Lord in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

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

*We lift up prayers of thanksgiving for the birth of:*

- Samuel Adam, great nephew of Lisa M, born on 10/21

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

- Julie O who fell and broke her kneecap
- Ros. S who is recovering from surgery

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

*Silence for individual prayer.*

Lord in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**



Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of 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**

*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](http://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**

Awake, My Soul!

Heather Sorenson

The Chancel Choir

## OFFERTORY



Not as we ought but as we are a - ble, we  
of - fer our thanks as we come to your ta - ble. Through  
Word and Spir - it bless us; through bread and wine re - fresh us that  
we may be filled, that we may be filled with love.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. God of new beginnings,  
**as we prepare to come to this Table, pour out your spirit in this room. Bless our offerings. Make this meal a new beginning of faith, hope, and love. Allow us to experience welcome here. Allow for all to be fed here. Allow for all to sense your presence here. With hope we gather. With hope we begin again. Amen.**

## HOLY COMMUNION

Loving God, we come to this Table today with our longings.

In a world that so often feels like it's ending,

**we crave the hope of a new beginning.**

We long to heal from the endings of our hurting world and start again,  
**rooted in your good news.**

Week by week, and bit by bit, we repeat the truths that we so often need to hear,  
**trusting that by your grace, it is never too late to start again.**

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

So in this spirit of beginnings,

**we come to your Table and we ask that you would meet us here.**

Pour out your Spirit on this ordinary meal, that in this bread and cup we may glimpse a new day.

**Meet us here with a taste of your new beginning. Allow this joyful feast to be the start of something new. Amen**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

With joy and hope, we weave our voices together to pray the words your son 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**

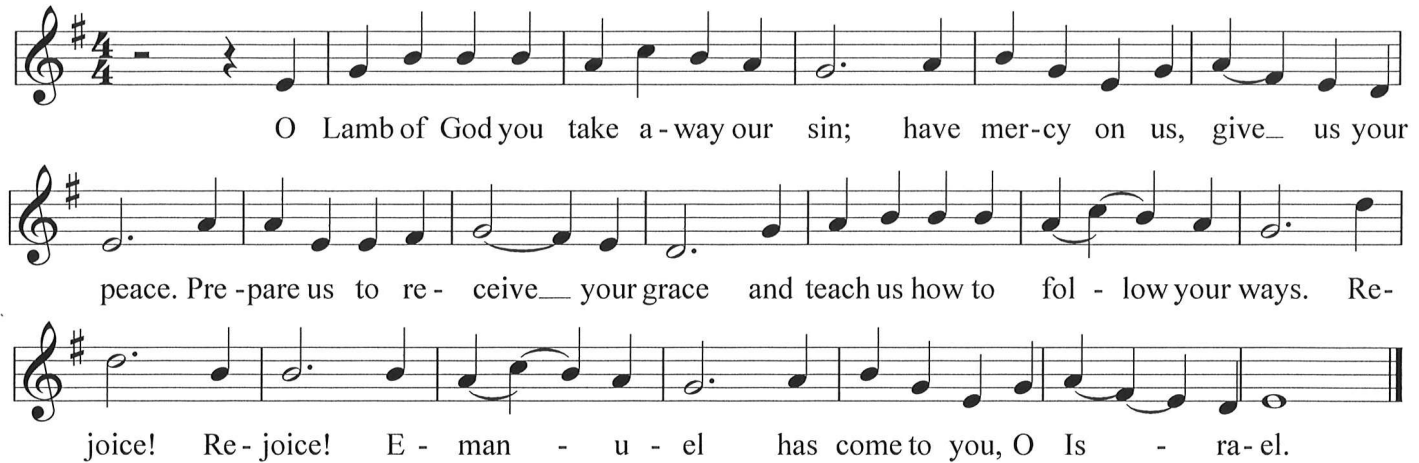
Come. This good news is for you. All are welcome here.

**Thanks be to God.**

## DISTRIBUTION

*Our communion bread is gluten-free, unless noted by the pastor. Grape juice is available; indicate your need to the communion assistant.*

## THE COMMUNION



O Lamb of God you take a-way our sin; have mer-cy on us, give\_ us your  
peace. Pre -pare us to re - ceive\_ your grace and teach us how to fol - low your ways. Re-  
joice! Re - joice! E - man - u - el has come to you, O Is - ra - el.

## COMMUNION HYMNS

As Saints of Old  
Meditation  
(Instrumental)

ELW 695  
George Blake

## TABLE BLESSING

### POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name.

**Amen.**

## LEAVING TO SERVE

### **BENEDICTION**

As you leave this place, may you have the wisdom to lean on one other. May you have the courage to hold onto hope, the compassion to do the good that is yours to do, and the confidence to trust that God sees you as a blessing. For in a world full of dead ends, Advent invites us to begin again. So start here. Start now. Start with love and begin again. In the name of † Christ, our new beginning, go in peace.  
**Amen.**

<b>SENDING HYMN</b>	Christ, Be Our Light	ELW 715
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### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **POSTLUDE**

In Thee Is Gladness

(IN DIR IST FREUDE)

Giovanni G. Gastoldi  
setting, Wilbur Held

## **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

Additional musical leadership provided by:

James Berner, guitar

Sue Cardinal, flute

Nancy Price, cantor

Phyllis Stock, piano

Rich Towsley, guitar

Neil Vokes, percussion

Dave Wideman, cantor / percussion

**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](mailto: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](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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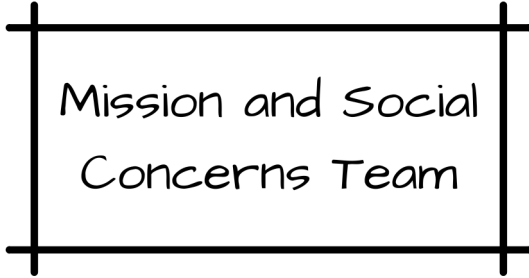
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"Meditation" Music: George Blake © 1998 Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp. (ASCAP) — admin. Warner Bros. Publications U.S. Inc.

And what does the LORD require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?  
Micah 6:8 NRSV



monthly meetings hybrid  
in-person and through Zoom

Contact Julie Owen  
([jowen@heritagechristianservices.org](mailto:jowen@heritagechristianservices.org)) to learn more!

## ***Altar Flowers***

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



## **Second Sunday Dinner Ministry**

BLC prepares and delivers hot meals  
on the 2nd Sunday each month to  
those in need in our community.



Contact the church office to help with  
cooking or deliveries!

## ***Support Groups*** ***Meet every two Tuesdays***



**GRIEF SUPPORT  
GROUP,  
11 AM**



**CAREGIVER  
SUPPORT  
GROUP,  
2 PM**

## Be Not Afraid

How would you live if you were not afraid? Fear is used by politicians to gain our votes, by the media to get our attention, by advertising firms to sell us what we don't need, and by TV evangelists to get our donations. What fears are used against us? One is scarcity, the fear that we won't have enough or won't get our share. Our false belief that having more money and "stuff" will save us binds us as slaves. In many cases, having less can free us to live by faith.

The writer of Hebrews 11:1 states, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Normally, we read forward from this verse, but the word "Now" is a clue that we should look back. Hebrews 10:39 says, "But we are not among those who shrink back and so are lost, but among those who have faith and so are saved." Who shrinks back? Those who are afraid. Who are saved? By implication, those who do not shrink back and are not afraid. So fear is not only a faith issue but an issue of our salvation. And is that not what we would expect? What more do we need to be saved from than our worst fears? What good is a savior who does not help us confront our fears? As noted above, our fears are the handles that marketers, politicians, and supervisors often use to control us and bend us to their plans and desires.

But like the pain that warns us of injury and nausea that tells us we are becoming ill, our fear has a positive use: it lets us know our vulnerability, and it tells us what we truly value and truly trust. "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). The powers and principalities promise us what we can see. Where do we put our true faith and trust?