



Jesus: a way in the
WILDERNESS

Sunday, March 9, 2025
First Sunday in Lent



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

PRELUDE

Trio and Fughetta on “You Are the Way; to You Alone”

(DUNDEE)

Austin C. Lovelace
tune, *Psalter*, Edinburgh, 1615

ANNOUNCEMENTS

These forty days called Lent are like no other. It is our opportune time to return to the God who rescues, to receive the gifts of God’s grace, to believe with the heart and confess with the mouth the wonder of God’s love in Jesus, and to resist temptation at every turn. This is no small pilgrimage on which we have just embarked. It is a struggle Jesus knew. It is a struggle Jesus shares. The nearness of the Lord, in bread and wine, water and word, will uphold and sustain us.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Amen.

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God’s abiding faithfulness.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Faithful One,

you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but our lives do not always reflect you and your love for the world. We do not show others the tender compassion you have shown to us. We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all people. We oppress others, even though you have set us free again and again. We squander the abundant gifts of the earth. Transform our lives and guide us again in the way of the cross. Amen.

Beloved in Christ, God's walks with us through the wilderness of our lives and does not abandon us. In † Christ your sins are forgiven. You belong to God and are never alone.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN	O Lord, throughout These Forty Days	ELW 319
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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.

KYRIE

Leader Assembly

Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.

Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O Lord God, you led your people through the wilderness and brought them to the promised land. Guide us now, so that, following your Son, we may walk safely through the wilderness of this world toward the life you alone can give, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and 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: Romans 10:8b-13

Our creed is triune: filled with the Spirit of our baptism, we call Jesus Lord. Inspired by God’s generosity, our baptismal identity opens us up to all.

^{8b} “The word is near you,

in your mouth and in your heart”

(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim), ⁹ because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For one believes with the heart, leading to righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, leading to salvation. ¹¹ The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. ¹³ For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

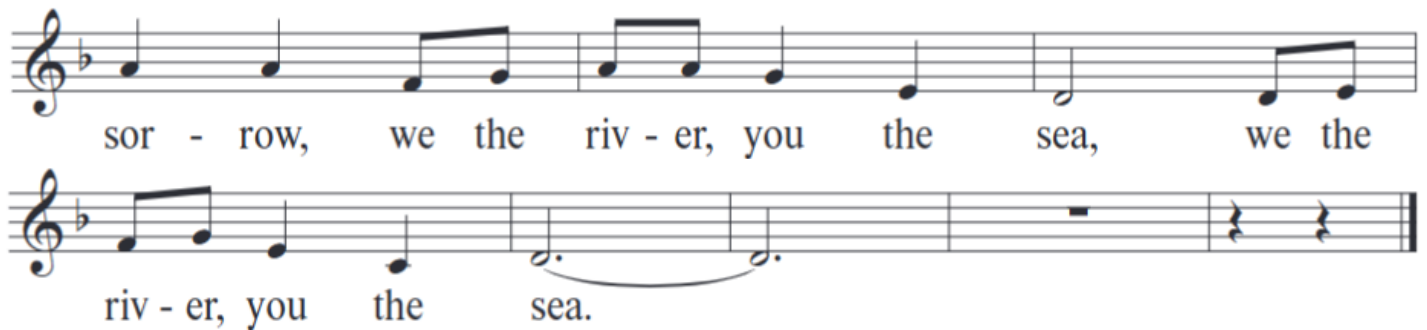
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Christ, you lead and we shall fol - low, stum-bling
though our steps may be; one with you in joy and



The holy gospel according to Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Luke 4:1-13

We too live in a wilderness where evil is ever before us. Yet we too have the Spirit of God and are called to worship only the Lord God. The gospel speaks the good news that Jesus is with us in all our times of testing

¹ Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ² where for forty days he was tested by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over he was famished. ³ The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.” ⁴ Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone.’”

⁵ Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ And the devil said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. ⁷ If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” ⁸ Jesus answered him, “It is written,

‘Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.’”

⁹ Then the devil led him to Jerusalem and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰ for it is written,

‘He will command his angels concerning you,
to protect you,’

¹¹ and

‘On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’ ”

¹² Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the
test.’ ” ¹³ When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an
opportune time.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

*Take a breath to reflect on God’s Word in silence before we begin to sing the
hymn of the day.*

HYMN OF THE DAY

As Your Spirit in the Desert

ACS 923

Choir: stanza 1

All: sts. 2 – 5



1 As your Spir - it in the des - ert led the Christ to
2 As your fire and cloud - y pil - lar Is - rael's tribes to
3 Though wild beasts may lurk in shad - ow, and dire thirst may
4 Through the nar - row gate now draw us, past all em - pire's
5 God of des - ert, God of prom - ise, you have bid us



dust and stone, so in - still our hearts with cour - age now to
Ca - naan led, may your pres - ence be our com - fort, may your
sear and sting, you have prom - ised liv - ing wa - ters wait - ing
pull and strife, where be - yond our fear and cling - ing stands the
jour - ney on through the days of dust and dark - ness to the

cross where Christ has gone. Let us cross in - to the
 man - na be our bread. Let us cross in - to the
 for us at the spring. Let us cross out of the
 thresh - old of new life. Let us cross out of the
 ris - ing of the dawn. Let us cross out of the

wil - der - ness so to walk where Christ has gone.
 wil - der - ness with God's man - na as our bread.
 wil - der - ness to the wa - ters of the spring.
 wil - der - ness to the thresh - old of new life.
 wil - der - ness to the ris - ing of the dawn.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

#1 Dear Lord, guided by your Light and your Presence we ask that you stir us to share your promise of love and forgiveness with those in need who strive in the wilderness of this life. God in your mercy

receive our prayer.

#2 Dear Lord, at this time we long for the renewal of the earth, the trees, the plants, and all creation. You created our world and all that sustains us. It is our responsibility to live and act to protect the very source of our human existence. Please grant us the will to do so. God in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

#3 Dear Lord, our world seems full of wilderness and despair. We ask that you impart in our political leaders the ability to have: Wisdom with Compassion; Progress with Mercy; and Action with Justice. God in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Gracious God, help us to experience your presence through the children, youth, and young adults around us, especially: Brielle, Cameron, Catherine, Charlotte, and Claire. May this season of Lent be a time of renewal for us and our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. God in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Loving God there are many members, relatives and friends who are hurting from the loss of loved ones, concerned about loved ones who are facing surgery and others who are in hospitals and care facilities. We ask that you be near them all to ease their journeys.

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

- Nancy C, sister-in-law of Pat S, who died on 2/26/25

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Neil V, who is hospitalized following a stroke
- Phillip S, brother-in-law of Peter M, who is recovering from surgery
- Mike K, father of Alli O's friend, who is recovering from surgery
- Carson, neighbor of Pat E, who has been hospitalized with congestive heart failure

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

Silence for individual prayer.

God in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

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

As the Deer

Martin Nystrom

The Chancel Choir

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. Gracious Provider,
you give us all that we need: faithfulness, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, and love and open your heart to the world. As we prepare to feast on your bounty, deepen our commitment to sharing those provisions with others, through our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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

Here is food and drink for the journey. Take and be filled.

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 sins of the

To repeat
world, have mer - cy on us.

Last time
world, grant us peace.

HYMN FOR COMMUNION

Eat This Bread

ELW 472

Refrain to be sung by the congregation

All:

*“Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and never be hungry.
Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst.”*

Cantor:

- 1. Christ is the bread of life, the true bread sent from the Father. **Ref.***
- 2. Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, but this is the bread come down from heaven. **Ref.***
- 3. Eat his flesh, and drink his blood, and Christ will raise you up on the last day. **Ref.***
- 4. Anyone who eats this bread, will live forever. **Ref.***
- 5. If we believe and eat this bread, we will have eternal life. **Ref.***

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Generous Host, you have shared your feast with us and sustained us with your very self. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your loving presence might nourish the world, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

May God who calls us to travel along new paths and through unknown perils fill us with faith and courage, and may † Christ's hand lead us in love and support us each step of the way by the power of the Spirit.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN	Bless Now, O God, the Journey	ELW 326
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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Jesus walks with you.

Thanks be to God.

CHORAL BENEDICTION

Lead Me, Lord

text, based on Psalms 4:8 and 5:8
music, Samuel Sebastian Wesley

*Lead me, Lord, lead me in thy righteousness;
make thy way plain before my face.
For it is thou, Lord, thou, Lord only,
that makest me dwell in safety.*

During the season of Lent we omit the Postlude and provide space for silence and reflection following worship. Please honor this time of meditation by moving conversations outside of the sanctuary.

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:

Kathy Moragne, cantor

Sue Cardinal, flute

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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"Trio and Fughetta on You Are the Way; to You Alone", Tune: The CL Psalms of David, Edinburgh, 1615

Music: Austin C. Lovelace, 1989 Concordia Publishing House

"As Your Spirit in the Desert", Text: Susan Palo Cherwien Music: Michael D. Costello

Text © 2012 Sussan Palo Cherwien (admin. Augsburg Fortress), Music © 2015 Augsburg Fortress

"As the Deer", Words and Music: Martin J. Nystrom, © 1984 Universal Music--Brentwood-Benson Publishing (ASCAP)

- admin. Capitol CMG Publishing, "Eat This Bread", Text: Taizé Community

Music: Jacques Berthier, Text and music © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

"Lead Me, Lord", Text: based on Psalms 4:8 and 5:8, Music: Samuel Sebastian Wesley

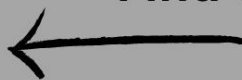
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between sundays 



Find episodes of our
podcast here!



An Identity on Which We Can Rely

In Luke's gospel, the story of Jesus' temptation comes immediately after his baptism and a lengthy listing of his ancestors. Both help confirm the identity of Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God. Now Jesus is led into the wilderness, where his identity is put to the test by the devil. The specific temptations are in some ways secondary to the question that introduces two of them. Twice the devil asks, "If you are the Son of God . . ." (Luke 4:3, 9), perhaps implying that the devil believes he knows better than Jesus what it means to be God's Son. But Jesus, "full of the Holy Spirit," is able to stand firm in his identity and deny the devil's attempts to redefine who he is.

In our baptisms, we too are given the identity of God's child, and we are given the presence of the Holy Spirit. Our baptisms do not protect us from temptation, even as Jesus himself endured temptation. However, in our baptisms we are given an identity that can help us endure the temptations and the challenges that our lives are bound to include. Baptism gives us the confidence to trust that our identity is defined by our relationship to God, and not by anything else. In this confidence, we can accept our failures and shortcomings and live boldly in a manner that seeks to emulate Christ's own life.

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