



Jesus: a way in the
WILDERNESS

Sunday, April 6, 2025
Fifth Sunday in Lent



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

PRELUDE

My Song Is Love Unknown

(LOVE UNKNOWN)

Michael Burkhardt
tune, John Ireland

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our God makes all things new. In the first reading God promises it. In the gospel Mary anticipates it, anointing Jesus' feet with costly perfume in preparation for the day of his burial. In baptism, God's new person (you!) rises daily from the deadly mire of trespasses and sins.

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 love.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Loving 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 arms are always stretched open wide to welcome the wandering ones home. In † Christ your sins are forgiven. You have a place in God's house forever.

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.

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. Creator God, you prepare a new way in the wilderness, and your grace waters our desert. Open our hearts to be transformed by the new thing you are doing, that our lives may proclaim the extravagance of your love given to all through your Son, 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: Isaiah 43:16-21

The prophet declares that long ago God performed mighty deeds and delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage through the waters of the sea. Now, God is about to do a new thing, bringing the exiles out of Babylon and through the wilderness in a new Exodus,

- ¹⁶ Thus says the LORD,
who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters,
¹⁷ who brings out chariot and horse,
army and warrior;
they lie down; they cannot rise;
they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:
¹⁸ Do not remember the former things
or consider the things of old.
¹⁹ I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.
²⁰ The wild animals will honor me,
the jackals and the ostriches,
for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,
²¹ the people whom I formed for myself
so that they might declare my praise.

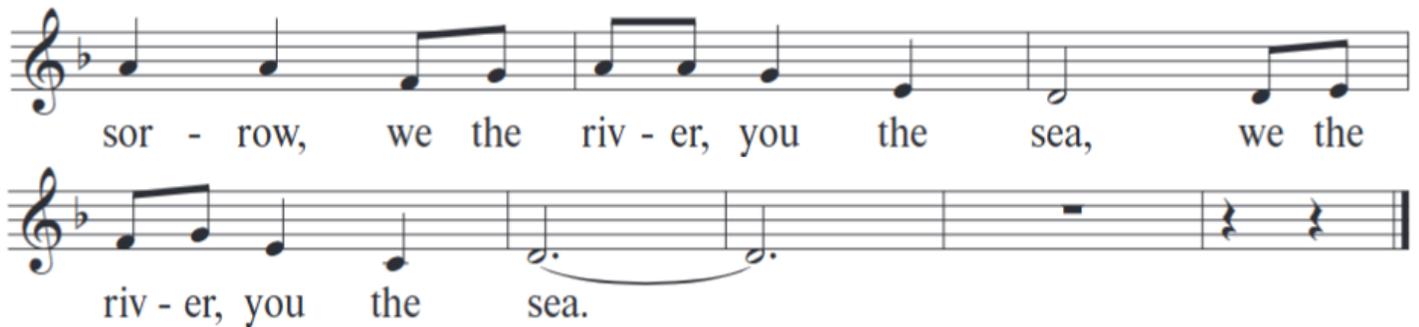
The word of the Lord.

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: John 12:1-8

Judas willfully misinterprets as waste Mary's extravagant act of anointing Jesus' feet with costly perfume. Jesus recognizes that her lavish gift is both an expression of love and an anticipation of his burial.

¹ Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ² There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him. ³ Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus's feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴ But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, ⁵ "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" ⁶ (He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) ⁷ Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸ You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."'''

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.

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 The church declares your praise, O God. Guide us in the example of Isaiah's imagination and Mary's faith and devotion; that our lives, too, may be poured out in love as we trust in your promises. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

#2 The earth declares your praise, O God. Make a way for the planet's future in the sea and the wilderness, the mountains and plains, the tundra and wetlands. Repair habitats and sustainable ecosystems on, above, and beneath the ground. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

#3 The nations declare your praise, O God. Where religious differences divide, bring together those who worship you in the name of Jesus Christ and those who call to you with different names. Guide interreligious dialogue, that faith may unite rather than divide communities. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

We declare your praise, O God. Support and uphold children, youth, and young adults, especially: Ethan, Eva, Evan, Finnegan, and Grace. We pray also for our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe, called to minister to its community in love. God in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

The communion of saints declares your praise, O God. We give thanks for those who have died and raise up those in need of your healing power.

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

- Pat Kurtz, who died on 3/30
- Barbara S., mother of Kathy F's daughter-in-law, who died on 3/25

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Marcy A, who is recovering at home from a recent hospitalization

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

Shepherd Kind and Holy

John Foley, S. J.

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,



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.

The musical score is written on a single treble clef staff in B-flat major. It begins with a 3/4 time signature and a key signature of one flat. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are placed below the notes. The score includes two repeat sections: the first is marked 'To repeat' and the second is marked 'Last time'. The time signature changes to 4/4 for the final phrase.

HYMN FOR COMMUNION

Spirit, Open My Heart

ACS 1043

All: Refrain

Refrain



Spir-it, o - pen my heart to the joy and pain of
liv-ing. As you love may I love, in re - ceiv - ing
and in giv - ing. Spir - it. o - pen my heart.

Cantor:

1. God, replace my stony heart with a heart that's kind and tender.
All my coldness and fear to your grace I now surrender. **Ref.**
2. Write your love upon my heart as my law, my goal, my story.
In each thought, word, and deed, may my living bring you glory. **Ref.**
3. May I weep with those who weep; share the joy of friend and neighbor. As I
live from day to day, love will be my finest labor. **Ref.**

MUSIC FOR COMMUNION

I Need Thee Every Hour

(NEED)

Larry Sue
tune, Robert Lowry

The Chancel Bells

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	O God of Mercy, God of Light	ELW 714
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Stanzas: 1/All 2/Choir 3/Women 4/Men 5-6/All

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:

Donna Berner, 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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"My Song Is Love Unknown", Tune: John Ireland, Music: Michael Burkhardt
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"Shepherd Kind and Holy", Text and Music: John Foley, S.J., © 1985 John Foley, S. J. (adm. Oregon Catholic Press)
"Lamb of God", Music: Marty Haugen, from Mass of Creation, © 1984, 1985, 2010, GIA Publications, Inc.
"My Heart", Text: Ruth Duck, Music: Irish melody; adapt. Alfred V. Fedak, Text © 1996 Pilgrim Press
Music © 2011 Alfred V. Fedak
"I Need Thee Every Hour", Music: Robert Lowry, Arranger: Larry Sue (ASCAP), © 2024 Larry Sue
"Lead Me, Lord", Text: based on Psalms 4:8 and 5:8, Music: Samuel Sebastian Wesley

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.

Palm/Passion Sunday, April 13 at 8:55 am (in person and livestream)

Maundy Thursday, April 17 (in person and livestream)

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

6 pm (in person only) – Remembering Jesus' last supper with his disciples, we will begin worship with a shared meal at tables in the Narthex and end in silence in the sanctuary after the altar is stripped

Good Friday, April 18 at 7 pm (in person and livestream) – **Tenebrae Service**

Easter Sunday, April 20 at 8:55 am (in person and livestream) **and**

11 am (in person only)

Easter Breakfast served 9:45 – 10:45 am

Facing Death

Mary of Bethany recognizes Jesus' mission: he has come to die. Perceiving the new thing God is doing, she embraces his death and pours out her devotion to Jesus in an extravagant act. The prophet beseeches the Israelites to forget the old pattern of salvation—the dry way through the Red Sea. Now God will make a new way, a wet way, in a dry, barren, and death-filled place.

On this Sunday in Lent, salvation lies not behind us but before us, through the death and resurrection of Jesus. Mary's action in the face of death is bold. She anoints a corpse, and in so doing honors Jesus' vulnerability and his life. She models love for the other disciples and for us.

By honestly facing the reality of death, we are more fully able to live honoring our own vulnerability and the humanity of others. We live with gratitude. We are more able to love one another and God extravagantly. However, in our culture, mortality is often avoided. The stench of death is removed through chemicals, and deceased bodies are cosmetically enhanced to appear as life-like as possible.

Each day, we the baptized boldly face death, trusting that God has made a new way, a wet way, to travel from death to life. God in Christ has honored human vulnerability by becoming flesh and by laying down his own life. He is the new way through a dry, barren, and death-filled place. Because Christ Jesus has made them his own, the baptized walk wet through the desert places of this life, pouring out the whole of their lives, down to the very last hair, in extravagant love for God and for the people God has formed.