



It is the Lord!

JOHN 21:7

Sunday, May 4, 2025
Third Sunday of Easter



BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

PRELUDE

Voluntary on “Vruechten”

(This Joyful Eastertide)

Brenda Portman

tune, *Dauids Psalmen*, Amsterdam, 1684

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The disciples make a big splash and eat breakfast with the risen Jesus. Wading in the water (remembering baptism) and eating with Jesus (celebrating holy communion) is our weekly encounter with the risen Christ. Jesus asks us again and again: Do you love me? And Jesus invites us, again and again, to follow him, bringing the Easter life to others.

GATHERING

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen, indeed. Alleluia!

In the name of ✠ the One who was, who is, and who is to come.

Amen.

Baptized into Christ's death and resurrection, and called to live the baptized life, let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Water may be poured before or during the thanksgiving.

Holy God, we give you thanks for the waters of baptism, waters that make a people your own, that restore to wholeness, and empower us to be witnesses in your name. Baptized into you, O Living One,
make us one as you are one.

We give you thanks for the waters of baptism, waters that strengthen believers and give new life to beloved servants of your church; waters that extend your boundless love and cross barriers of our own making.

Baptized into you, O Living One,
make us one as you are one.

We give you thanks for the waters of baptism, waters that open the hearts of believers and give a voice in the night to those in captivity; waters that set your people on a new path, rejoicing in the Spirit's power.

Baptized into you, O Living One,
make us one as you are one.

Grant us grace, love, and life, O Living One, that our every day is shaped by these waters that give us our very lives in you. We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Crucified and Risen One.

Amen.

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| GATHERING HYMN |
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| Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven |
|------------------------------------|

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| ELW 864 |
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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

Assisting minister



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

All



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



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



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



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



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



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Eternal and all-merciful God, with all the angels and all the saints we laud your majesty and might. By the resurrection of your Son, show yourself to us and inspire us to follow 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: Acts 9:1-6 [7-20]

Saul (later called Paul) was an ardent persecutor of all who followed the Way of Christ. This reading recounts the story of his transformation beginning with an encounter with Jesus Christ on the way to Damascus.

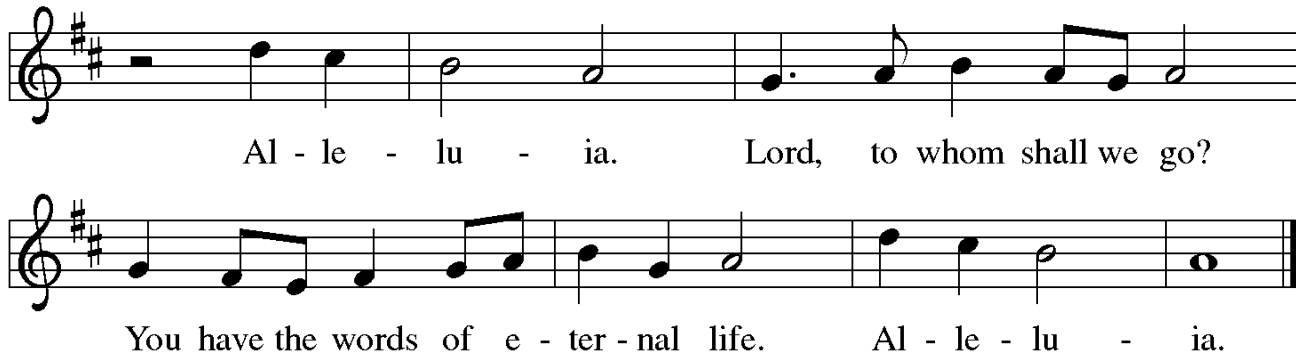
¹ Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³ Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" ⁵ He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ⁶ But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." [⁷ The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. ⁸ Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was without sight and neither ate nor drank.

¹⁰ Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord." ¹¹ The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, ¹² and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." ¹³ But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name." ¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; ¹⁶ I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." ¹⁷ So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain

your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”¹⁸ And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized,¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus,²⁰ and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.”]
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



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

GOSPEL: John 21:1-19

The risen Christ appears again to his disciples by the sea where they were first called. After echoes of the fishing and feeding miracles, he gives a final reminder of the cost of a disciple's love and obedience.

¹ After [he appeared to his followers in Jerusalem,] Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he showed himself in this way. ² Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. ³ Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

⁴ Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵ Jesus said to them, “Children, you have no fish, have you?” They answered him, “No.” ⁶ He said to them, “Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. ⁷ That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he had taken it off, and jumped into the sea. ⁸ But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

⁹ When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. ¹⁰ Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.” ¹¹ So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them, and though there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹² Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

¹⁵ When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” ¹⁶ A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.” ¹⁹ (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, “Follow me.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Touch That Soothes and Heals

ACS 939

Stanzas — Cantor: 1 /*Ref.*

All: 2 /*Ref.*, 3 /*Ref.*, 4 /*Ref.*



1 Touch that soothes and heals the hurt - ing, hands that
2 Feed the hun - gry, clothe the na - ked, vis - it
3 Love and serve with - out dis - tinc - tion all earth's
4 Hands that beck - on lit - tle chil - dren, bind a



break a loaf of bread; steps that walk be - side the
ones in need of care, give the home - less warmth and
peo - ple, first and least. Know with - in each act of
wound, pre - pare a meal, feet that rush to share good



wea - ry, bear - ing bur - dens in their stead:
shel - ter: Christ will find a wel - come there.
kind - ness hope and whole - ness are in - creased.
tid - ings, Christ a - ris - en, still re - veal.

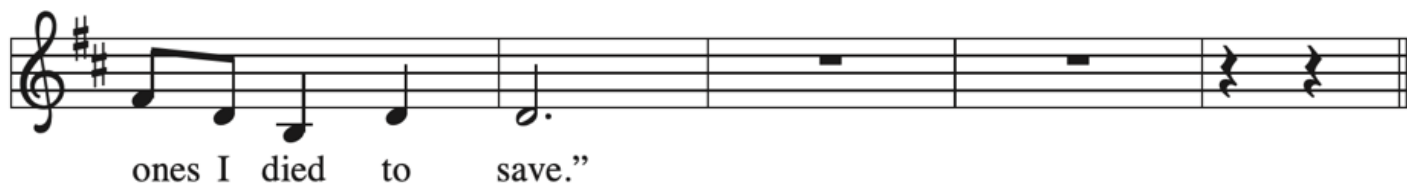
Refrain



“See my hands and feet,” said Je - sus, love a - ris - en from the



grave. “Be my hands and feet,” said Je - sus, “live as



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.

God of resurrection and new life, we come before you in prayer for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

#1 Your love sustains the church and its ministries. By that love, equip youth directors, Sunday school teachers, and all who guide formation in the church to nurture vibrant, living faith among your people. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#2 Your abundance is made known throughout creation. Preserve oceans and rivers, lakes and estuaries so that all creatures living in them might flourish. Make us wise stewards of Lake Ontario and all our local watersheds. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#3 Your wisdom guides all who strive for justice and peace. Strengthen the work of grassroots organizers, especially among communities on the frontlines of justice work. Amplify the voices of those most in need, that their leadership guides the way forward. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Sustain new life in the ministry of our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe and in us through the children, youth, and young adults around us, especially: Kevin, Lauren, Leah, Lily, and Logan. May this season of Easter open us to the new ways and new ideas that they reveal to us. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Bring new hope to all in need.

We give thanks for:

- the safe arrival of Reagan Elisabeth R, great-granddaughter of George and Nancy F

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Michele, friend of Jim and Donna B
- Eric E, nephew of Pat E, who is suffering from seizures.
- Anita T, who is recovering from a recent fall and hospitalization
- Volker H as he transitions to living at the Presbyterian Home in Rochester
- Ginny S, who anticipates surgery on 5/6
- Pat E, who anticipates surgery on 5/5
- Lucille A, coordinator for Project Linus in Genesee Valley
- Bob K, at home recovering from knee surgery on 4/24

Hear the names of those we raise to you in our hearts or on our voice.

Silence for individual prayer.

God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen 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

Jesus, the Very Thought of You

words, Don Besig and Nancy Price
music, Don Besig

OFFERTORY

How can an - y praise we of - fer mea - sure all the
thanks we owe? Take our hearts and hands and voic - es
gifts of love we can be - stow. Al - le - lu - ia!
Al - le - lu - ia! Tri - une God, to you we sing!

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Risen One,
**you have gathered us around your table of grace along with these gifts we
bring. Come among us again, breathe your life into us, and enliven us with
this meal, that we may live as your risen body in the world. Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

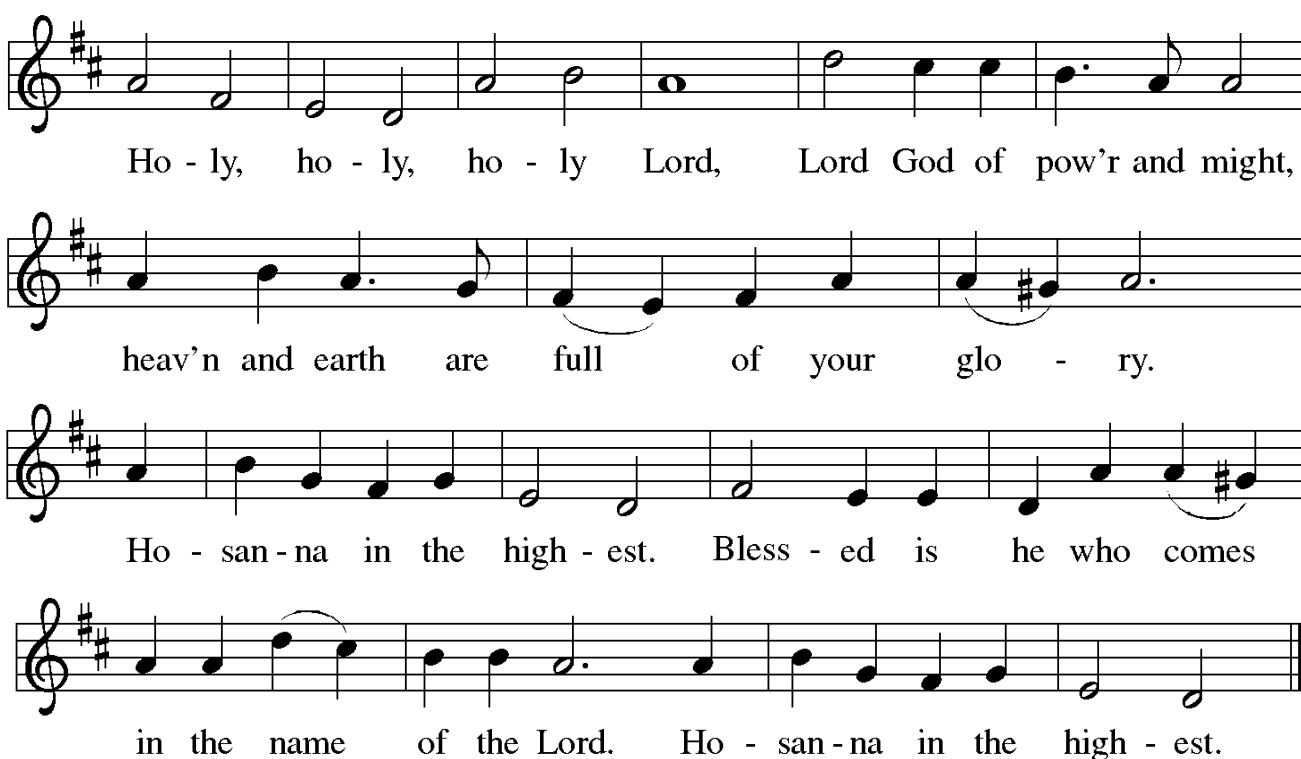
Lift up your hearts.

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, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
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

One in body, one in spirit we pray:

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

**Come to the table of grace. Receive the gift of new life.
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.

HYMN AND MUSIC FOR COMMUNION

What Wondrous Love Is This
In This Very Room

ELW 666

Ron and Carol Harris
arr. Fred Bock

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE

2 Day of de - light and beau - ty un - bound - ed, tell the news, the gos - pel
spread! Day of all won - der, day of all splen - dor, praise Christ
ris - en from the dead! Sing now of mourn - ing turned in - to
danc - ing; sing now the mys - t'ry, hope of our glo - ry;
sing with thanks - giv - ing, al - le - lu - ia! Sing now of
fast - ing turned in - to feast - ing; sing the Lord's fa - vor
last - ing for - ev - er; sing, all things liv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!

LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

The triune God, who was, who is, and who is to come, Sovereign, ☩ Savior, and Spirit, light your way with resurrection dawn, now and always.

Amen.

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| SENDING HYMN | This Joyful Eastertide | ELW 391 |
|---------------------|------------------------|---------|

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. In Christ you are made new.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Easter Postlude on “Handel”

Janet Correll

(JUDAS MACCABAEUS)

tune, George Frideric Handel

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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"Jesus, the Very Thought of You", Words: Don Besig and Nancy Price (ASCAP), Music: Don Besig (ASCAP)
© 2008 Harold Flammer Music (adm. Shawnee Press, Inc.)
"Touch that Soothes and Heals", Text: Mary Louis Bringle, Music: Gregg DeMey, Text © 2002 GIA Publications, Inc.
Music © 2008 Re:Create Music (adm. Faith Alive Christian Resources)
"Voices Raised to You" – stanza 5, Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., Music: Carolyn Jennings,
Text © 1997 GIA Publications, Inc., , Music © 1996 Carolyn Jennings
"In This Very Room", Music: Ron and Carol Harris, Arranger: Fred Bock, © 1979 and this arr. © 1991 Ron Harris Music
"Day of Delight and Beauty Unbounded" – stanza 2, Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, Music: Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi
Text © 2011 GIA Publications, Inc., "Easter Postlude on HANDEL", Tune: JUDAS MACCABAEUS by George Frideric Handel
Music: Janet Correll, © 1993 Belwin Mills, c/o CPP/Belwin, Inc.

Reflection on Today's Offering of Music?

Nancy Price shared this devotion in our recent Lenten Devotional. Today's choir anthem is the one she referenced.

Several years ago, two dear friends who sang with our Presbyterian church choir were each diagnosed with breast cancer within a couple of weeks of each other. The cases were severe enough to warrant double mastectomy surgery and aggressive follow up treatment. Their journeys were quite similar and, somehow, they found ways through it all to inspire and encourage others. My co-writer, Don Besig and I wanted to let them know how much we admired and cared about them both. So, we wrote an anthem to celebrate them. The text for that anthem is below. I always feel very comforted by this anthem and its text, and feel it is especially meaningful during Lent and the wilderness journeys we often must go through.

My friends are still cancer free and living faith-filled lives!

JESUS, THE VERY THOUGHT OF YOU

For Holly and Robbyn, who will not allow adversity
to shake their faith or dim their spirits.

By Nancy Price and Don Besig

Through the longest days and the darkest of nights,
When I feel alone and afraid,
You will give me strength to continue the fight
And help me to find my way.

When the clouds grow dark and the rain starts to fall,
And my heart is burdened with fear,
You will help me see, at the end of it all,
A rainbow begin to appear.
Jesus, the very thought of You
Comforts my troubled soul;