



*Sunday, May 18, 2025  
Fifth Sunday of Easter*



**BETHLEHEM**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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



## **PRELUDE**

Chant de Mai  
(Song of May)

Joseph Jongen

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Easter initiates a new day. It anticipates a new heaven and a new earth. The risen Christ is making all things new. In the mystery of holy baptism God has made new people of us. Today Jesus invites us to see everyone in a new light—through the lens of love.*

## **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.**

<b>GATHERING HYMN</b>	Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds	ELW 367
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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 11:1-18**

*In defense of his earlier baptism of non-Jewish believers, Peter demonstrates to the members of the Jerusalem church that God's intention to love Gentiles as well as Jews is revealed in Jesus' testimony. In this way the mission to the Gentiles is officially authorized.*

<sup>1</sup> Now the apostles and the brothers and sisters who were in Judea heard that the gentiles had also accepted the word of God. <sup>2</sup> So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, <sup>3</sup> saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" <sup>4</sup> Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, <sup>5</sup> "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners, and it came close to me. <sup>6</sup> As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. <sup>7</sup> I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' <sup>8</sup> But I replied, 'By no means, Lord, for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' <sup>9</sup> But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.' <sup>10</sup> This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. <sup>11</sup> At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. <sup>12</sup> The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. <sup>13</sup> He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; <sup>14</sup> he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.' <sup>15</sup> And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. <sup>16</sup> And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' <sup>17</sup> If then God

gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?”<sup>18</sup> When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, “Then God has given even to the gentiles the repentance that leads to life.”

**Thanks be to God.**

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

### GOSPEL: John 13:31-35

*After washing the disciples' feet, predicting his betrayal, and then revealing his betrayer, Jesus speaks of his glorification on the cross. This deep complicated love of Jesus, even to death on the cross, will be the distinctive mark of Jesus' community.*

<sup>31</sup> When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. <sup>32</sup> If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. <sup>33</sup> Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’ <sup>34</sup> I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

I Come with Joy

ELW 482

### 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 The natural world is coming to new life all around us. The trees and plants are in full bloom. May we come to understand it is your glorious creation that makes our lives possible on this earth and therefore it is our role to act responsibly to preserve the fragile environment. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

#2 May we remember the purpose of our lives here on earth: To Act Justly; to Love Mercy; and to Walk Humbly With our God. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

#3 This is the time of year our young people are moving up in school, graduating , considering trade schools, and colleges. Lord send your love and encouragement to these precious lives as they face new, exciting, and possibly scary situations.. 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: Maxwell, Meghan, Merrin, Micah, and Michael. 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.**

May we seek to mend broken relationships, misunderstandings, and conflicts with a kind word, an open heart, and the strength of our Lord's compassion. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Bring new hope to all in need.

*We give thanks for:*

- Evan P. and Emily B as they are married. Evan is the son of Raelynn C.
- The people of God at Bethany Lutheran Church in Elmira, NY as they celebrate 135 years of ministry today! Pastor Hoffman served at Bethany as her first call.

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

- David B (son of the late Jo B, longtime member of BLC), who died on 5/14
- Miller M, friend and fellow Eagle Scout of Daniel M, who died suddenly on 5/7 at the age of 20
- Christopher R (grandson of Dorice R and nephew of Kim K) who died unexpectedly on 5/5
- Elaine B, mother of Dave W, who died on 4/27

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

- Tim P, uncle of Hans W-P, who is undergoing medical testing
- Bob and Joyce C. as Bob transitions to hospice care (still at St John's)
- Marja R, who has been suffering from a persistent knee injury
- Sue T, who is recovering from surgery on 5/12
- Anita T, who is recovering from a recent fall and hospitalization

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](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.*



## **THANKSGIVING AND BLESSING FOR QUILTS**

### **OFFERING OF MUSIC**

Arise! Shine!

words, J. Paul Williams  
music, Joseph M. Martin

The Chancel Choir

## 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.**

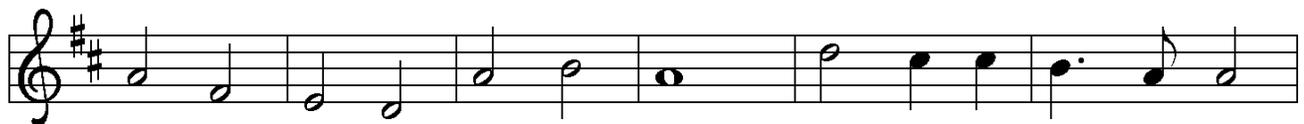
Lift up your hearts.

**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.**

## **JOY – JESUS, OTHERS, YOU**

*Kids in Grades 3-5 are invited to come forward first for communion and then leave worship for a special activity time until 10:15 am. During this time they will work on a project together and use the Faith 5 practices (Share, Read, Talk, Pray, Bless)*

## **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

Where Charity and Love Prevail

ELW 359

## 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.**

**DISMISSAL**

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Go in peace. In Christ you are made new.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

Lanfair”

(Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Alleluia!)

David Schack

tune, Robert Williams

## **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 Susan DePasquale, for serving as our organist and pianist today.

**The altar flowers today . . .** are given in honor of John and Pat Schmeelk's 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary (May 22<sup>nd</sup>)

**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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“Chant de Mai” , Music: Joseph Jongen, © 1917 Masters Music Publications, Inc.  
“Arise! Shine!”, Words: J. Paul Williams (based on Isaiah 60:1-6), Music: Joseph M. Martin  
© 1996 GlorySound and Malcolm Music (adm. Shawnee Press, Inc.)  
“Voices Raised to You” – stanza 5, Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., Music: Carolyn Jennings  
Text © 1997 GIA Publications, Inc., Music © 1996 Carolyn Jennings  
“Day of Delight and Beauty Unbounded” – stanza 2, Text: Delores Dufner, OSB  
Music: Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, Text © 2011 GIA Publications, Inc.  
“Llanfair” , Tune: Robert Williams, Music: David Schack, © 1981 Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp.



## **God's Beautifully Messy Community**

From abandonment to homecoming and from a narrow scope to a broader vision of God's realm, these are the promises proclaimed. The early church and our faith communities are called to engage this reality. A community of Jewish Jesus-followers overcomes fear and expands to include the much larger Gentile world. In the hymnody of the psalm the whole creation and her people are ushered into praise and the trumpeting of a new community. An exiled follower of Jesus sees in the midst of his situation a vision of the Holy One who proclaims a new heaven and earth, stripped of tears and death. Finally, Jesus shares that he will no longer be physically present with his disciples, and points them to a new way of being a community of love for one another. Through the depth of the texts for this day, people are invited to explore the beauty and the messiness of community. The church, like any other human organization, is filled with the challenges of what it means to live together (for example, who is welcome? What rules do people need to follow? How do we care for one another?). Unlike other human institutions, however, we are called to be centered and re-centered in the unapologetic love for others. In our imperfection we are welcomed and called to invite others. We offer, in a spirit of humility, signs of welcome and love to others, just as God in Christ has been revealed to us.