

*Sunday, August 24, 2025
11th Sunday after Pentecost*



BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

PRELUDE

Trumpet Voluntary

William Goodwin

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attention kids: You are welcome to select something from the activity baskets to use during worship! They are located near the entrance to the sanctuary. Ask an usher if you need help!

Parting words offer the highest points and ideals we wish to relay to others. The very best and most important parts of a message often come as part of our final instructions. The end of the book of Hebrews works to summarize the most important aspects, not only of the book itself, but of a life of faith. These exhortations, warnings, and guidelines are a helpful overview of the traits of a faithful Christian, and they also serve as an opportunity for self-reflection.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who looks upon us with compassion, forgives our sins, and heals our lives.

Amen.

We confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another

Silence is kept for reflection.

Have mercy, O God,

against you, you alone, we have sinned. In your compassion, cleanse us from our sin and take away our guilt. Create in us a new heart and give us a steadfast spirit. Do not cast us away, but fill us with your Holy Spirit and restore your joy within us. Amen.

As tender as parent to child, so deep is God's compassion for you. As high as heaven is above earth, so vast is God's love for you. As far as east is from west, so far God removes your sin from you, renewing your life through † Jesus Christ. Blessed be God who crowns us with mercy and love.

Blessed be God 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.

HYMN OF PRAISE

The musical score is written on six staves in a single system. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature (C). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics printed below the notes. The lyrics are: "Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth; yours the a - noint - ing, the ra - di - ant worth. Ours the re - joic - ing for spir - its a - flame; ours the thanks - giv - ing to your ho - ly name. Ours be the tell - ing of deeds great - ly done; yours be the glo - ry, O God, yours a - lone." The score ends with a double bar line.

Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
 yours the a - noint - ing, the ra - di - ant worth.
 Ours the re - joic - ing for spir - its a - flame;
 ours the thanks - giv - ing to your ho - ly name.
 Ours be the tell - ing of deeds great - ly done;
 yours be the glo - ry, O God, yours a - lone.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O God, mighty and immortal, you know that as fragile creatures surrounded by great dangers, we cannot by ourselves stand upright. Give us strength of mind and body, so that even when we suffer because of human sin, we may rise victorious through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

READING: Hebrews 12:18-29

Using images of Moses, the writer presents a striking vision of the new covenant of God made possible in Christ. There is no longer fear; only awe in the new promise in Christ into which we are invited.

¹⁸ You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, ¹⁹ and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. ²⁰ (For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death.") ²¹ Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear.") ²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, ²³ and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴ and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

²⁵ See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking, for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven! ²⁶ At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven." ²⁷ This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of what is shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. ²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe, ²⁹ for indeed our God is a consuming fire.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.



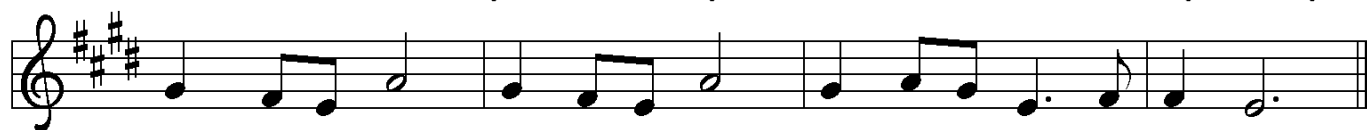
Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.



When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,



warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.



Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Luke 13:10-17

Jesus heals a woman on the sabbath, offering her a new beginning for her life.

When challenged by a narrow reading of the sabbath command, Jesus responds by expanding “sabbath work” to include setting people free from bondage.

¹⁰ Now [Jesus] was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹ And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, “Woman, you are set free from your ailment.” ¹³ When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. ¹⁴ But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the Sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, “There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured and not on the Sabbath day.” ¹⁵ But the Lord answered him and said, “You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it to water? ¹⁶ And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the Sabbath

day?"¹⁷ When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame, and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things being done by him.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Glorious Things of You Are Spoken

ELW 647

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.

Drawn into the embrace of the holy Trinity, we lift our prayers for the wholeness of the church, the world, and all creation.

A brief silence.

#1 You call your church to proclaim liberation and freedom to all. Give wisdom to bishops, synod councils and staff, and congregation leaders as they pursue a more just and equitable church and society. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#2 You inspire all creation to sing and bless your holy name. Send healing rains to parched places and relief to flooded lands. Lead us to enact policies to rebuild ruined ecosystems and habitats. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#3 You work vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. Strengthen the resolve of world leaders and local officials in the way of love and mercy, so that all persons may experience abundant life. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We pray for those who are beginning and returning to college this year and those who work to educate and support them in their education; and for our siblings in faith in our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. May our partnerships remind us of your abundance. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Uphold all who suffer, O God. Give refuge to those of us who know rejection, and shelter to those of us who have nowhere to lay our heads. Bring any who are sick into your healing presence. Give all your fullness of joy.

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

- Alice Y, mother of Ruth G, who died on 8/4

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Jim M, as he recovers from anticipated surgery on 8/20
- John G, father of Andy G, who is recovering from a fall

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.

Gather all our prayers in your mercy, O God, through Jesus Christ, our 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

Good News!
(inc. "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot")

Lloyd Larson
tunes, Traditional spiritual

Piano Four-Hands

OFFERTORY

1 God of the fer - tile fields, sha - per of
2 We would be stew - ards true, hold - ing in

earth that yields our dai - ly bread: forth from your
trust from you all that you give; help us in

boun - teous hand come gifts your love has planned,
love to share, teach us like you to care

that all in ev - 'ry land be clothed and fed.
for peo - ple ev - 'ry - where, that all may live.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Creator God,

in your wisdom you bring forth all that is good and the harvest is plentiful.

Strengthen us at your table with these gifts of the earth and our labor, that we may work for the good of all; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Cantor



1. Gath - er us in - to one through bread and wine,

2. Pour out up - on us now your Spir - it, Lord,

ALL



gath - er us in - to one through bread and wine.

pour out up - on us now your Spir - it, Lord.

Cantor



Fill us up to be your liv - ing pres - ence,

Breathe new life and send us to your peo - ple,

ALL



fill us up to be your liv - ing pres - ence.

breathe new life and send us to your peo - ple.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Spirit, 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

The kingdom of God is set before you. Eat and rejoice!

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

HYMN FOR COMMUNION

Spirit of Gentleness

ELW 396

TABLE BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. Mothering God,

you gathered us to your table and we drank deeply of your grace. Send us out

by your Spirit to love our neighbors as ourselves and proclaim your love in

Jesus' name. Amen.

LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

The love of God abound in you; the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ fill your hearts; and the life of the Spirit † bless you and give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN	Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing	ELW 545
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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Live by the Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Doxology Postlude

(OLD HUNDREDTH)

Peter Pindar Stearns
tune, Louis Bourgeois

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:

Michael Koncilja, piano

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: Molly Vasey is in the office from 9am - 1pm Tuesday - Thursday and can be reached by calling (585) 223-0634 or emailing office@blcfairport.org. Our co-Pastors are available Sunday – Thursday and on-call for emergencies. Contact them directly to schedule an appointment either by calling the church office or emailing pastor.hoffman@blcfairport.org or pastor.amy@blcfairport.org



Evergreen East Food Distribution

Sundays, July 20 thru September 21

We'll begin packing food in the parking lot at 10:30 AM (after worship) and then distribute food at 11:15 AM. Extra produce from your garden or any non-perishable items to add to the food cupboard are welcome!

Contact Julie Owen
(jowen@heritagechristianservices.org) to get involved!



***Join BLC's email list
to receive our weekly
STAR e-newsletter
and other
announcements!***



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NRSVue Bible, copyright 2021, Division of Christian Education
"God of the Fertile Fields" – stanza 1&2 Music: ITALIAN HYMN, Felice de Giardini, 1716-1796
Text © 1955, ren. 1983 The Hymn Society, admin Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188
"Glory to you, God" Music: J. Bert Carlson © 2020 Holy Communion, Setting 12 (adm. Augsburg Fortress)
"Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil" Text: Handt Hanson; Music: Handt Hanson
© 1985 Prince of Peace Publishing, Changing Church, Inc.
"Come, Let Us Eat" Music: Billema Kwillia, adapt. © Lutheran World Federation
"Trumpet Voluntary" from *Old English Organ Music for Manuals* (Vol. II)
Music: William Goodwin© 1966 Oxford University Press
"Good News!" – with "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" Tunes: Traditional spiritual
Arranger: Lloyd Larson © 2014, and 2018 Lorenz Publishing Company
"Doxology Postlude" Tune: Louis Bourgeois; Music: Peter Pindar Stearns
© 1977 Malcom Music, Ltd. (adm. Shawnee Press, Inc.)

God's Verbs

Through the lens of the gospel, today's texts offer a clear identification of God's work. What is God doing? God is reaching out to the bound-up to proclaim release from captivity. God is lifting up the oppressed. God is satisfying the needs of the afflicted. God raises up foundations. God restores and rebuilds, reconciles and sets free. God, whose word can shake the very foundations of the earth, speaks a better word than we've ever heard, or that we could ever speak. Like yeast that's included in bread dough or the seed of a particularly stubborn weed sown in the garden (Luke 13:18-21), when God speaks, there's no going back. The bread will be leavened; the garden will have a mustard bush; and precious daughters and sons of Abraham will be set free. It is God's work and God's activity that Isaiah calls us to be about. Why is the prophet so confident that light will conquer darkness and needs will be satisfied? Because this is already God's work, or as the prophet says, because "the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

These texts focus us on the *verbs*, the actions, of God. When we're attuned to the verbs of God within passages like these, it might make it easier to see and give witness to God's work and the verbs around us right now.