

*Sunday, September 7, 2025*  
*13th Sunday after Pentecost*



BETHLEHEM  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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



## PRELUDE

Voluntary on “Hymn to Joy”

Michael Burkhardt  
tunes, L. van Beethoven / J. Stanley

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

*God knows every bit of you and loves you just the way you are. Your voice, your presence, your worship matters to God and to the BLC community! Claimed by God in the waters of baptism and fed at Christ's table of mercy, YOU MATTER!*

## GATHERING

*Una versión en español de la orden de culto de hoy está disponible en el himnario azul All Creation Sings que comienza en la página 8.*

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains all of creation.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

To you, O God,

**all hearts are open, to you all desires are known. We come to you, confessing our sins. Forgive us in your mercy, and remember us in your love. Show us your ways; teach us your paths; and lead us in justice and truth, for the sake of your goodness in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

By water and the Holy Spirit God gives you a new birth, and through the death and resurrection of ☩ Jesus Christ, God forgives you all your sins. The God of mercy and might strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life.

**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



1 ¡Glo-ria a Dios, glo-ria a Dios, glo - ria en los cie - los!  
1 Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est!



¡Glo-ria a Dios, glo-ria a Dios, glo - ria en los cie - los!  
Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est!



¡A Dios la glo-ria por siem-pre! ¡A Dios la glo-ria por siem-pre!  
To God be glo-ry for - ev - er! To God be glo-ry for - ev - er!



¡A - le - lu - ya! ¡A - mén! ¡A - le - lu - ya! ¡A - mén! ¡A - le - lu - ya! ¡A - mén!  
Al - le - lu - ia! A - men! Al - le - lu - ia! A - men! Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!



¡A - le - lu - ya! ¡A - mén! ¡A - le - lu - ya! ¡A - mén! ¡A - le - lu - ya! ¡A - mén!  
Al - le - lu - ia! A - men! Al - le - lu - ia! A - men! Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!



¡A - le - lu - ya! ¡A - mén! ¡A - le - lu - ya! ¡A - mén!  
Al - le - lu - ia! A - men! Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray. Direct us, O Lord God, in all our doings with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## **HEARING GOD’S WORD**

### **DISMISSAL TO WORSHIP FOR KIDS AND JOY!**

*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 designated spaces. **Worship for Kids** (Ages 3 – Grade 2) meets across the hall from the sanctuary and **JOY!** (Grades 3 – 5) meets downstairs. Kids will return during the offering so they can participate in Communion.*

### **READING: Jeremiah 18:1-11**

*God teaches Jeremiah a lesson at a potter’s shop. Just as a potter may destroy an unacceptable vessel, starting over to refashion it into one of value, so God molds and fashions the nations, including Israel.*

<sup>1</sup> The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: <sup>2</sup> “Come, go down to the potter’s house, and there I will let you hear my words.” <sup>3</sup> So I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel. <sup>4</sup> The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

<sup>5</sup> Then the word of the Lord came to me: <sup>6</sup> Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the Lord. Just like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. <sup>7</sup> At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, <sup>8</sup> but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it. <sup>9</sup> And at another moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, <sup>10</sup> but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it. <sup>11</sup> Now, therefore, say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus says the Lord: Look, I am a potter shaping evil against you and devising a plan against you. Turn now, all of you, from your evil way, and amend your ways and your doings.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya. A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya. El Se - ñor re - su - ci - tó.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Christ is ris - en, ris'n in - deed.

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

## GOSPEL: Luke 14:25-33

*Jesus speaks frankly about the costs of discipleship. Those who follow him should know from the outset that completing the course of discipleship will finally mean renouncing all other allegiances.*

<sup>25</sup> Now large crowds were traveling with [Jesus], and he turned and said to them, <sup>26</sup> “Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. <sup>27</sup> Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. <sup>28</sup> For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? <sup>29</sup> Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, <sup>30</sup> saying, ‘This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.’ <sup>31</sup> Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? <sup>32</sup> If he cannot, then while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. <sup>33</sup> So

therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **SERMON**

<b>HYMN OF THE DAY</b>	Take My Life, That I May Be	ELW 583
------------------------	-----------------------------	---------

## **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.*

Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

#1 We pray for the church to follow in your ways, that it may be a witness to your love for all people. Help us choose all that is life-giving and confront the forces of death. God of mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

#2 We pray for creation, that it may be cherished and nurtured. Sustain farmlands, animals, and waters; restore places affected by calamities; and shield coastlands from rising seas. God of mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

#3 We pray for this congregation, that we may be united in love and faith. Refresh our hearts in Christ, and deepen our support of one another. We pray that our sharing of faith may transform lives. God of mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

We pray for Direct Support Professionals who assist others with care and daily tasks; and for our siblings in faith in our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. May our partnerships remind us of your abundance. God of mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

We know that all people matter in your eyes and you know their cares and concerns, their hopes and joys. We pray for those whose needs are known to us.

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

- Christel R, mother of Mark L, who died on 8/21

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

- Phyllis S, who is scheduled for knee replacement surgery on 9/8
- Leeann L, friend of Ron M, who is recovering from a heart attack
- Marilynn, mother of Jeff C, who was recently hospitalized
- Andy G, who is recovering from surgery on a broken arm
- Lisa R, who continues to struggle with depression
- Richard B, father of Dave and Marsha G's daughter-in-law, who is recovering from a severe accident
- Pat, mother of Chris M's friend, who is experiencing health challenges



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

*Silence for individual prayer.*

God of mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend.

**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.*



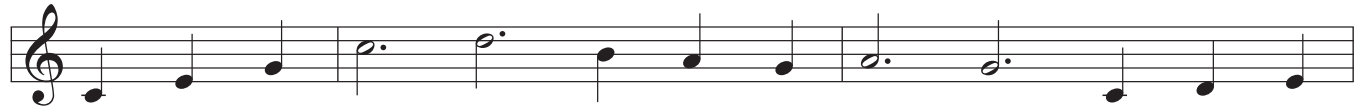
#### **OFFERING OF MUSIC**

Be Thou My Vision

Alice Parker  
tune, Irish traditional

The Chancel Choir

## OFFERTORY



God, bless the la - bor we bring to serve you, that with our



neigh - bor we may be fed. Sow - ing or till - ing, we would work



with you, har - vest - ing, mill - ing for dai - ly bread.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Holy God, gracious and merciful,  
**you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn  
our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care;  
and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and  
Lord. 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.**

## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Blessed are you, O God, creator of heaven and hearth. You rescued your covenant people, led them on all their journeys, and taught them by the prophets. You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit in this meal,  
**and make us one in this community of faith and with your people throughout the world.**

Glory and praise to you, O God,  
Author of life, Word made flesh, Power of the Most High, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

## **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**

Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. Come to this meal of mercy.

**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



Cor - de - ro de Dios, tú que qui - tas el pe -  
O Lamb . . of God, you . . take a - way the



ca - do del mun - do: ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.  
sin of the world; . . . have . . mer - cy up - on us.



Cor - de - ro de Dios, tú que qui - tas el pe -  
O Lamb . . of God, you . . take a - way the



ca - do del mun - do: ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.  
sin of the world; . . . have . . mer - cy up - on us.



Cor - de - ro de Dios, tú que qui - tas el pe -  
O Lamb . . of God, you . . take a - way the



ca - do del mun - do: ten pie - dad de no -  
sin of the world; . . . have . . mer - cy up -



so - tros, ten pie - dad de no - so - stros.  
on us, have . . . mer - cy up - on us.



Da - nos tu paz. A - mén.  
Grant us your peace. A - men.

**HYMNS FOR COMMUNION**

Change My Heart, O God  
O Jesus, I Have Promised

ELW 801  
ELW 810

**TABLE BLESSING****BLESSING FOR THE START OF A NEW SCHOOL YEAR****LEAVING TO SERVE****BENEDICTION**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN**

God's Work, Our Hands

ACS 1000

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Do not lose heart.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

Allegro maestoso e vivace  
*from* Organ Sonata II in C Minor, op. 65, no. 2

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy

## **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 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:** 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](mailto: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](mailto:pastor.hoffman@blcfairport.org) or [pastor.amy@blcfairport.org](mailto: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!***



Augsburg Fortress resources are being livestreamed by permission. All rights reserved.  
From *Sundays and Seasons.com*. Copyright 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #43732.

Permission to stream and print the music in this service obtained from One License under Annual License #A-724002  
New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America.  
Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

"Gloria a Dios" Music: anonymous, Peru © 2020 Holy Communion, Setting 11 (adm. Augsburg Fortress)

"Aleluya" Music: anonymous, Honduras © 2020 Holy Communion, Setting 11 (adm. Augsburg Fortress)

"Praise and Thanksgiving" Text: Albert F. Bayly; Music: Gaelic tune (bunessan)

Text © Oxford University Press; Music (arr.) © 2006 Augsburg Fortress

"Cordero de Dios" Music: Rudy Espinoza © 2020 Holy Communion, Setting 11 (adm. Augsburg Fortress)

"Voluntary on HYMN TO JOY" Tunes: Ludwig van Beethoven / John Stanley (from *Ten Voluntaries*, op. 7)

Setting: Michael Burkhardt © 2018, 2000 Birnamwood Publications (adm. MorningStar Music Publishers, Inc.)

"Be Thou My Vision" Music: Alice Parker; Tune: Irish traditional © 1976 Hinshaw Music, Inc.

"Allegro maestoso e vivace" – from Organ Sonata II, op. 65, no. 2 Music: Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy © 1990 Novello & Company Limited

## Freed—From and For

Freedom flows through scripture. Moses reminds the people of Israel they have the freedom to choose between life and prosperity or death and adversity (Deuteronomy 30:15–20). Ironically, this freedom to choose life comes through the freedom to choose obedience to the commands of God. In other words, Moses tells the people, they are free to choose bondage to God and life or bondage to sin and death. Either way they will be bound to something.

In Philemon 1–21, Paul reminds Philemon that he—Paul—is not free but is a “prisoner of Christ Jesus.” This is Paul’s linguistic wordplay to help convince Philemon to free his slave Onesimus. Paul reminds Philemon that he has the freedom to hold on to his slave Onesimus and the freedom to grant Onesimus freedom as his brother in Christ.

In Luke 14:25–33, Jesus speaks a challenging word, which resonates in ways that might make modern people a tad uncomfortable. You might phrase it: Do you own your stuff or does your stuff own you? Jesus seems to suggest that our stuff, our possessions, could make it difficult to follow faithfully. It is easy to dismiss this suggestion with a wave of the hand, “Oh, that certainly is not me”—until you start to consider just how much stuff is stored up in our homes and attics and garages (some of the latter with no room for cars).

In Christ, freedom comes from letting go. Freedom comes through giving away and trusting Jesus. In Christ we are free people. Free to choose life, free to choose faithfulness, and free to open our arms wide and receive the free grace of God. This is the God who chooses to never stop loving us.