

Sunday, December 7, 2025
Second Sunday of Advent



BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

PRELUDE

Prelude on “O May We Be Still and Seek Him”
(QUEM PASTORES)

Peter Pindar Stearns
tune, German carol, 14th cent.

“Freu dich Sehr”
(Comfort, Comfort, Now My People)

Gerald Near
tune, *Genevan Psalter*, 1551

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Advent marks the ending and beginning of the church year and during this time, we return to our foundation – GOD MATTERS. God’s love and faithfulness endure through all our endings and beginnings. Our weekly scripture readings ground us in the stories of God whose was, who is, and who is to come. As we encounter the familiar characters of the story of Christ’s birth – Mary, Joseph, John the Baptist, the shepherds, the magi – we see the facets of God that can help us see and understand God’s living presence in each of us and deepen our connection to our source of life.

GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come Now, O Prince of Peace

text, Geonyong Lee / tr. Marion Pope
music, Geonyong Lee

The Chancel Choir

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Long-expected God,
**to you 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.**

God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness.
✠ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.
Amen.

GATHERING HYMN	Comfort, Comfort Now My People	ELW 256
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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.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

The Advent wreath is a circle with no beginning and no end. It is a symbol of God's unending love and faithfulness.

Its light reminds us of Jesus, the Light of the world. "In him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:4-5)

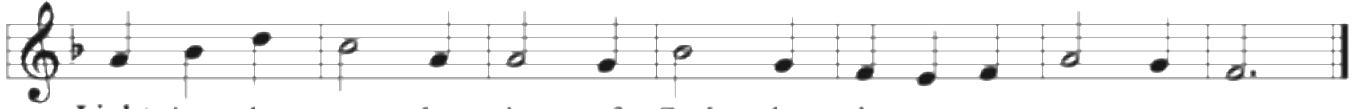
Jesus said, "Everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness. (John 12:46)

Like Joseph, make us unafraid to embrace God's mercy and bear the light of Christ, our Emmanuel.



1. Kin - dle this flame of Christ. May it burn bright and true.

2. God's realm is our de - sire, where peace and jus - tice reign.



Light-ing the way that is of God, the jour - ney we pur - sue.

Hea - ven and earth com - bined as one, when Christ shall come a - gain.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through 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 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: Psalm 85

¹ LORD, you were favorable to your land;
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

² **You forgave the iniquity of your people;**
you pardoned all their sin.

³ You withdrew all your wrath;
you turned from your hot anger.

⁴ **Restore us again, O God of our salvation,
and put away your indignation toward us.**

⁵ Will you be angry with us forever?
Will you prolong your anger to all generations?

⁶ **Will you not revive us again,
so that your people may rejoice in you?**

⁷ Show us your steadfast love, O LORD,
and grant us your salvation.

⁸ **Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people,
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.**

⁹ Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.

¹⁰ **Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.**

¹¹ Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.

¹² **The LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.**

¹³ Righteousness will go before him
and will make a path for his steps.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION





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

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18 - 25

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus. The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

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.

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

#1 With wisdom and understanding, inspire the faithful around the world. Unite hearts and minds in work to address poverty, access to housing, and equity among peoples. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#2 With counsel and might, move us to care for creation. As we dream of the day when all creatures will flourish alongside one another, guide us in ways humanity and all creation will mutually thrive. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#3 With righteousness and faithfulness, encourage nations to live in harmony with one another. We pray for international student and teacher exchanges, for our partner churches, and for the shared mission of Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We pray for those living with HIV/AIDS; 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.

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

- Reijo H, uncle and godfather of Marja R, who died on 11/26

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Tom S, who is recovering from an infection.
- Ray, friend of Dave W, who is struggling with health issues.
- Dottie, mother of Alli O'Malley, who has been hospitalized.

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.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.
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.



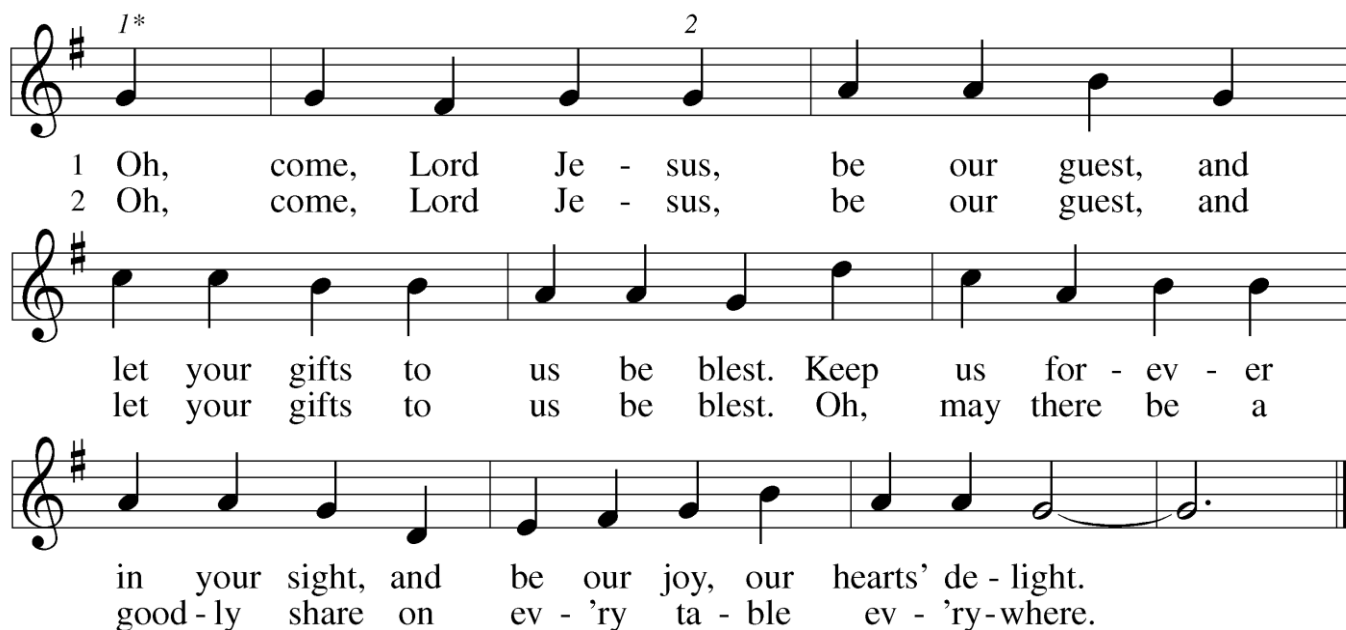
OFFERING OF MUSIC

Let the Christ Child In

Jay Althouse and Sally K. Albrecht

The Chancel Choir

OFFERTORY



1* 2

1 Oh, come, Lord Je - sus, be our guest, and
2 Oh, come, Lord Je - sus, be our guest, and

let your gifts to us be blest. Keep us for - ev - er
let your gifts to us be blest. Oh, may there be a

in your sight, and be our joy, our hearts' de - light.
good - ly share on ev - 'ry ta - ble ev - 'ry - where.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Nourishing God,
**you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal,
satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of
your kingdom come. Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION

As we gather at Christ's table of mercy, the Spirit and the church cry out:
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

All those who await his appearance pray:

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

The whole creation pleads:

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Long-expected Jesus, we come to your table and ask you to meet us here.
Open our hearts to believe that you come to us in this meal of grace. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

In fervent hope, we raise our voices in prayer 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 life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

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



O Lamb of God you take a-way our sin; have mer-cy on us, give us your
peace. Pre-pare us to re-ceive your grace and teach us how to fol-low your ways. Re-
joice! Re-joice! E-man-u-el has come to you, O Is-ra-el.

HYMNS FOR COMMUNION

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

ELW 241

My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness

ELW 251

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

May God who comes among us, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN	Hark, the Glad Sound!	ELW 239
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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Make your heart ready.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
(STUTTGART)

Robert J. Powell
tune, William Henry Havergal

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(adm. The General Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church, Nashville, TN)

“Word of God, Come Down on Earth” Text: James Quinn; Music: Johann R. Ahle
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“Come, Lord Jesus” Text: traditional table prayer, adapt. Susan Briehl; Music: tallis’ canon, Thomas Tallis
Text © 1996 Augsburg Fortress

“Lamb of God” – based on VENI, EMMANUEL; Music: French processional, 15th cent.
Text: adapt. David Eck; Text © 2011 David Eck

“Prelude on O May We Be Still and Seek Him”, Music: Peter Pindar Stearns, Tune: German carol, 14th cent. – QUEM PASTORES, © 1972 Coburn Press
“Freu dich Sehr – Comfort, Comfort Now My People”, Music: Gerald Near, Tune: Genevan Psalter, 1551
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“Let the Christ Child In”, Words and Music: Jay Althouse and Sally K. Albrecht, © 1994 Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”, Music: Robert J. Powell, Tune: William Henry Havergal – STUTTGART, © 2025 The Leupold Foundation

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:

The Chancel Bells

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: Sandy Squires holds office hours on Wednesdays from 9-1 and is responsive to phone and email Monday through Friday during usual business hours. Please communicate your needs through the church office by phone (585) 223-0634 or by email 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

Sunday Table December 7th

Join us in the
Fellowship Hall
for brunch and
Advent crafts.



Celebrate Christmas Eve



5:00 pm - Worship

6:45 - 7:00 pm
outdoors on the corner

7:30pm - Worship

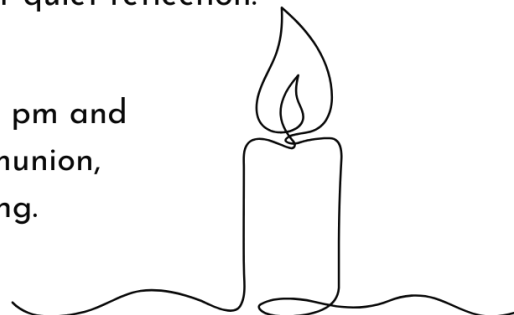
blcfairport.org/advent

Longest Night Service **Thursday, December 18**

This service makes space for difficult emotions like grief and anxiety during the holiday season.

If you have lost a loved one, feel weighed down by worry, or if Christmas is a challenging season for you, this service is for you. Sanctuary opens at 6:30 pm for quiet reflection.

Worship begins at 7:00 pm and includes prayer, communion, and candle lighting.



Prayer for the Second Sunday in Advent

Let your goodness, Lord, appear to us, that we, made in your image, conform ourselves to it. In our own strength we cannot imitate your majesty, power and wonder; nor is it fitting for us to try. But your mercy reaches from the heavens, through the clouds, to the earth below. You have come to us as a small child, but you have brought us the greatest of all gifts, the gift of eternal love. Caress us with your tiny hands, embrace us with your tiny arms, and pierce our hearts with your soft, sweet cries. Amen.

—from *The Complete Book of Christian Prayer*, p. 376.

This prayer was written by Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153). Born in France, Bernard was a key figure in the Cistercian movement, which sought to bring reform to the monastic system. His outstanding life, hymns, and practical piety have continued to influence Christian worship practices worldwide.