

*You are of
more value
than many
sparrows*

MATTHEW 10:31



*Sunday, June 21, 2026
Fourth Sunday after Pentecost*



BETHLEHEM
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

PRELUDE

“Sweet Prospect”

(Sweet Rivers of Redeeming Love)

Don Hustad

tune, *The Sacred Harp*, 1844

Lord, I Want to Be a Christian

Robert J. Powell

tune, African American spiritual

ANNOUNCEMENTS

God does not promise that the path of the disciple will be easy. Jeremiah feels the pain of rejection from those who do not want to hear what he has to say (Jeremiah 20:7-13). Jesus declares that his words may bring stark division. Even so, we need not be afraid for God accounts for each hair on our heads. Though we may experience rejection, frustration, division, and death, God’s grace and love make us a new creation each day. Marked with the cross and filled with holy food, we are sent from worship to witness to Christ in the world.

Red hymnal - ELW - Evangelical Lutheran Worship
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Blue hymnal - ACS - All Creation Sings

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose compassion endures forever.
Amen.

We confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,

we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ’s name we pray, Amen.

Jesus says, “Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” In the name of God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God’s love.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN	Take Up Your Cross, the Savior Said	ELW 667
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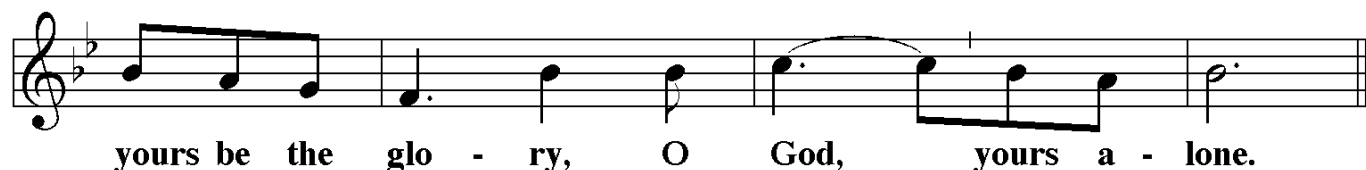
GREETING

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

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;



PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Teach us, good Lord God, to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, except that of knowing that we do your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

READING: Romans 6:1b-11

In baptism we were incorporated into the reality of Christ's death and resurrection. We have been made new in Christ through his death and resurrection to live freed from sin.

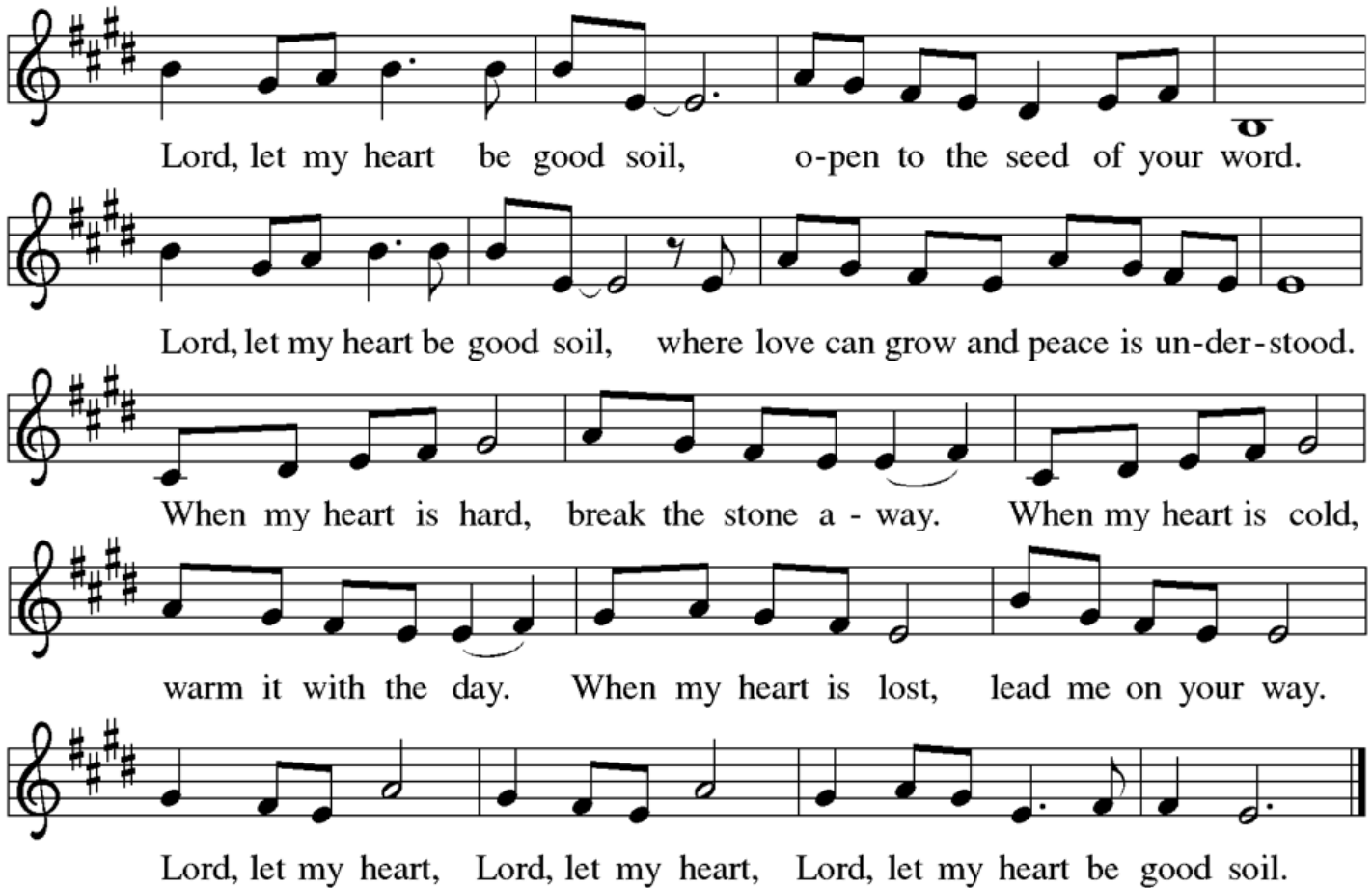
^{1b} Should we continue in sin in order that grace may increase? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, so we might no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For whoever has died is freed from sin. ⁸ But if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

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 Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 10:24-39

Jesus warns his disciples that their ministry in his name will meet with opposition. However, he assures them that they need not fear for the truth will come to light. Life is found in Christ.

[Jesus said to the twelve:] ²⁴ “A disciple is not above the teacher nor a slave above the master; ²⁵ it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

²⁶ “So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷ What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸ Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, fear the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰ And even the hairs of your head are all counted. ³¹ So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

³² “Everyone, therefore, who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven, ³³ but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

³⁴ “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace but a sword.

³⁵ For I have come to set a man against his father,

and a daughter against her mother,

and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law,

³⁶ and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household.

³⁷ “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me, ³⁸ and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

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.

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray for the church and the needs of the world.

A brief silence.

#1 Life-giving God, you have called your people to lose their lives for Jesus' sake. Strengthen your church to follow you in the face of difficulty. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#2 Creator God, you know every sparrow that falls to the ground. Protect migrating birds, endangered species, and their natural habitats. Empower us to care for your creation. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

#3 Sovereign God, you call us to act justly and love mercy. Protect those with marginalized identities to whom we have not shown the abounding love of Jesus. Bring an end to oppression and bigotry in all forms. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We pray for those in our church working for justice, total inclusion and love for humanity in all its diversity.; 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:

- Linda J, (especially husband, Dan, and daughters, Lynn, Diane, and Laura) who died on 6/13 and whose funeral will be 6/22
- Marcy A, whose funeral will be on 6/26
- Hays B., whose memorial service will be held on 6/27

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Fred S, who is hospitalized with bleeding
- Dana, cousin of Todd and Sara S, battling breast cancer and has an inoperable tumor
- Kaitlin M, age 2 and friends of the Westcotts, recovering and waiting for results from bone marrow transplant
- Michael G, a fellow Sensei of Joe S from Long Island
- Roberta, sister of Carolyn Ann S, who is recovering after 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.

Trusting you receive all our prayers, we commend our spoken and unspoken prayers to you, O God, through Jesus 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.

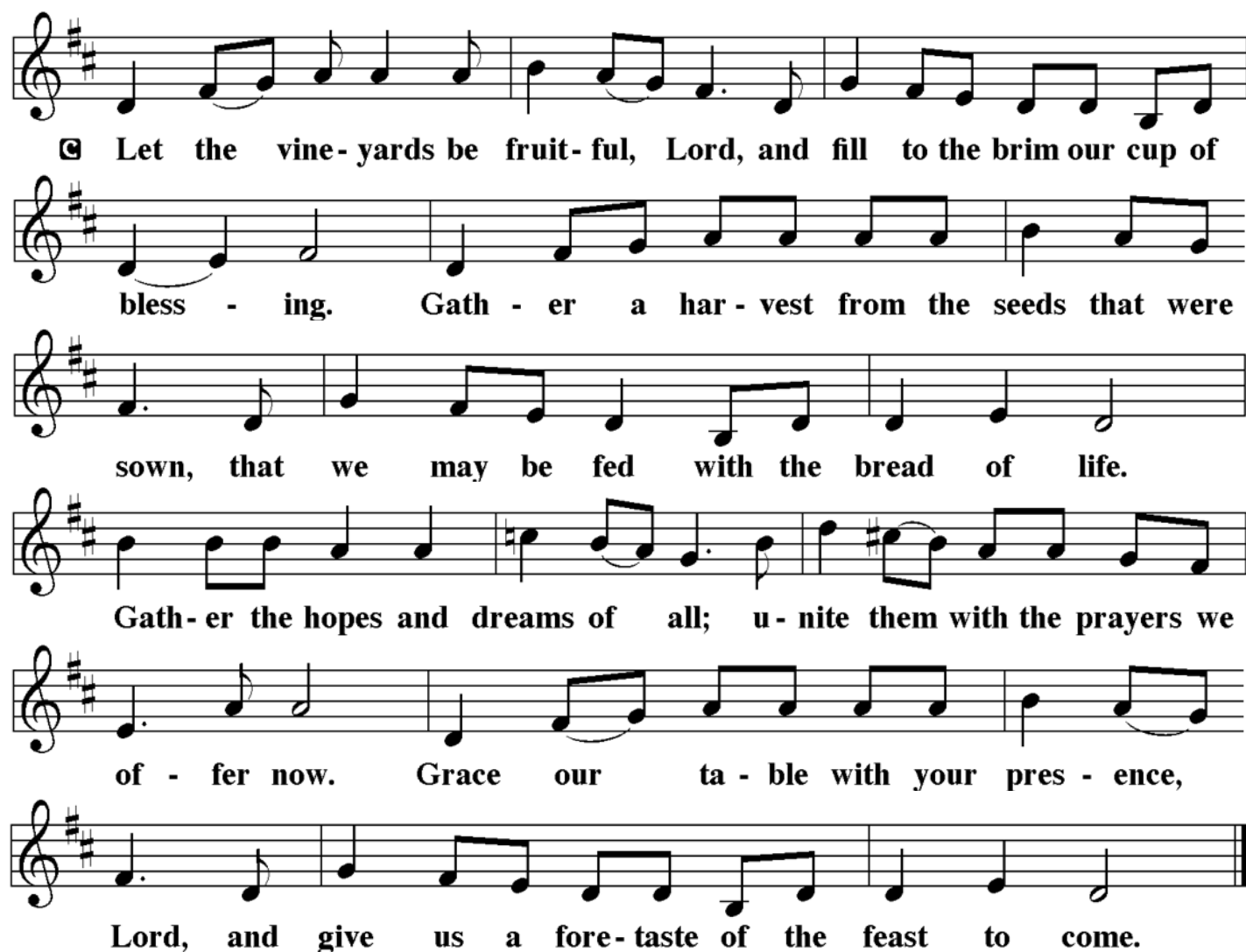


OFFERING OF MUSIC

Joshua Fit de Battle of Jericho

Mary McDonald
tune, African American spiritual

OFFERTORY



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were
sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u - nite them with the prayers we
of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,
Lord, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Loving God,
we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and
share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We
ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and
forever. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

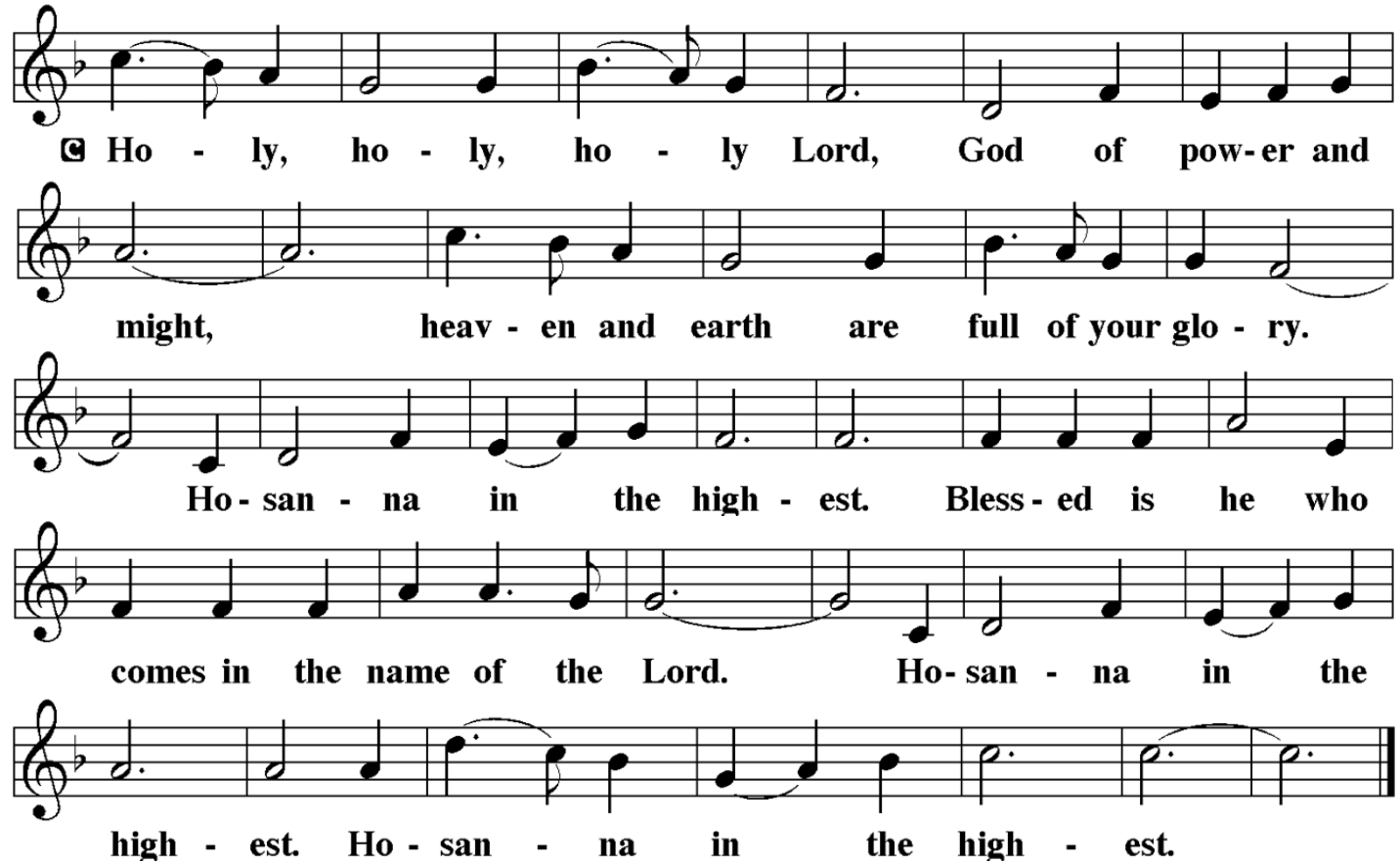
Lift up your hearts.

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:



The musical score is written on five staves in a single system. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes, with some phrases spanning across bar lines. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span multiple notes. The text is as follows:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and
might, heav - en 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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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

Heaven has come near. Come, share in the feast!

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



Come to the ta - ble of mer - cy, pre - pared with the wine and the bread.



All who are hun - gry and thirst - y, come, and your souls will be fed.



Come at the Lord's in - vi - ta - tion; re - ceive from his nail - scarred hand.



Eat of the bread of sal - va - tion; drink of the blood of the Lamb.

HYMNS FOR COMMUNION

Children of the Heavenly Father

ELW 781

Borning Cry

ELW 732

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever

Amen.

LEAVING TO SERVE

BENEDICTION

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ☩ one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN	How Firm a Foundation	ELW 796
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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“Foundation”

(How Firm a Foundation)

Wilbur Held
tune, American folk

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 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

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)

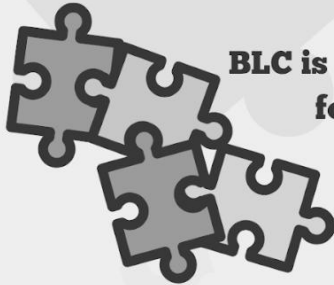
PRE-REGISTER NOW!

JULY 20-23, 2026



AT ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN IN PITTSFORD

**BLC is partnering with St. Paul's, Pittsford again
for this FREE summer's VBS program!
Ages Pre-K-5th Grade**



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“Glory to You, God”, All Creation Sings – Holy Communion, Setting 12, Text: Susan Palo Cherwien
Music: J. Bert Carlson, © 2020 Augsburg Fortress
With One Voice - Holy Communion, Setting Five, Music: Jeremy Young, © 2000, Augsburg Fortress
Gospel Acclamation: “Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil”, Text and Music: Handt Hanson
© 1985 Prince of Peace Publishing, Changing Church, Inc.
“Come to the Table”, Text: Claire Cloninger, Music: Martin J. Nystrom
© 1991 Integrity’s Hosanna! Music, Juniper Landing Music (adm. Word Music)
“Sweet Prospect” – Sweet Rivers of Redeeming Love, Tune: The Sacred Harp, 1844, Music: Don Hustad, © 1972 Broadman Press
“Lord, I Want to Be a Christian”, Tune: African American spiritual, Music: Robert J. Powell, © 2013 Lorenz Publishing Co.
“Joshua Fit de Battle of Jericho”, Tune: African American spiritual, Music: Mary McDonald, © 2010 Lorenz Publishing Co.
“Foundation”, Tune: American folk, Music: Wilbur Held, © 1984 Concordia Publishing House

God Comes First

God is, the theologians say, transcendent—beyond us, always exceeding our easy grasp. Recognizing God's awesome transcendence brings a reevaluation of other values. The God of vertigo-inspiring infinitude is also the God who knows the hairs of our head. Trusting this God, fear is defanged and faith becomes a sort of courage. We live in faithful relationship to the hair-counting God as we joyfully "acknowledge" the one who acknowledges us. And as we do so, reveling in the intimacy of God's loving regard for us, other relationships, even familial ones, take on a different cast. God comes first, we realize, not only in priority, but ontologically, "in the beginning" (John 1:1). Before the God who is at once gracious and transcendent, we "lose" our lives and discover the true life in following the way of Jesus the crucified Son.