



Fifth Sunday of Epiphany

February 8, 2026

The Good News for Today: Salt and light melt frozen hearts.

Thank you for worshiping with us at St. John's. Please fill out your yellow attendance card and place it in the offering plate when we collect the offering later in the service.

Light shines in the darkness for the upright, the psalmist sings. Isaiah declares that when we loose the bonds of injustice and share our bread with the hungry, the light breaks forth like the dawn. In another passage from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, the light of the world, calls his followers to let the light of their good works shine before others. Through baptism we are sent into the world to shine with the light of Christ.

Gathering Music

Prelude

STAND

Hymn: Christ, Be Our Light (Verses 1, 4, & 5) – ELW 715 (Red Book)

1 Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Refrain

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

4 Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone. *Refrain*

5 Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
signs of your kingdom come. *Refrain*

Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957

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Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters.

Amen.

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Mighty God, lover of justice,

you call us to life in community, but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors. We have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ, and forgives your sin in + Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace.

Amen.

Welcome & Greeting

Welcome to St. John's, where we are building a loving, accepting community centered on growing in Christ, and giving people a place to belong at any stage of their journey with God.

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.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray... Lord God, with endless mercy you receive the prayers of all who call upon you. By your Spirit show us the things we ought to do, and give us the grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

SIT

The Readings

Isaiah 58:1-12

Shortly after the return of Israel from exile in Babylon, the people were troubled by the ineffectiveness of their fasts. God reminds them that outward observance is no

substitute for genuine fasting that results in acts of justice, such as feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, and clothing the naked.

1 Shout out; do not hold back!

 Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion,

 to the house of Jacob their sins.

2 Yet day after day they seek me

 and delight to know my ways,

as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness

 and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;

they ask of me righteous judgments;

 they want God on their side.

3 “Why do we fast, but you do not see?

 Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”

Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day

 and oppress all your workers.

4 You fast only to quarrel and to fight

 and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today

 will not make your voice heard on high.

5 Is such the fast that I choose,

 a day to humble oneself?

Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush

 and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Will you call this a fast,

 a day acceptable to the Lord?

6 Is not this the fast that I choose:

 to loose the bonds of injustice,

 to undo the straps of the yoke,

to let the oppressed go free,

 and to break every yoke?

7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry

 and bring the homeless poor into your house;

when you see the naked, to cover them

 and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

8 Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,

 and your healing shall spring up quickly;

your vindicator shall go before you;

 the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

9 Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;

 you shall cry for help, and he will say, “Here I am.”

If you remove the yoke from among you,

 the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

10 if you offer your food to the hungry

 and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,

then your light shall rise in the darkness

and your gloom be like the noonday.
11 The Lord will guide you continually
and satisfy your needs in parched places
and make your bones strong,
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water
whose waters never fail.
12 Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

The Word of the Lord,

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 112:1-10

- ¹ Hallelujah! Happy are they who fear the Lord
and have great delight in God's commandments!**
- ² Their descendants will be mighty in the land;
the generation of the upright will be blessed.**
- ³ Wealth and riches will be in their house,
and their righteousness will last forever.**
- ⁴ Light shines in the darkness for the upright;
the righteous are merciful and full of compassion.**
- ⁵ It is good for them to be generous in lending
and to manage their affairs with justice.**
- ⁶ For they will never be shaken;
the righteous will be kept in everlasting remembrance.**
- ⁷ They will not be afraid of any evil rumors;
their heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord.**
- ⁸ Their heart is established and will not shrink,
until they see their desire upon their enemies.**
- ⁹ They have given freely to the poor, and their righteousness stands fast forever;
they will hold up their head with honor.**
- ¹⁰ The wicked will see it and be angry; they will gnash their teeth and pine
away;
the desires of the wicked will perish.**

1 Corinthians 2:1-16

Though people such as the Corinthians are enamored with human philosophy and wisdom, Paul continuously presents God's hidden wisdom which is Jesus Christ

crucified. True spiritual maturity involves judging ourselves and others in light of God's revelation in the cross.

¹When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the testimony of God to you with superior speech or wisdom. ²For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. ⁴My speech and my proclamation were made not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

⁶Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are being destroyed. ⁷But we speak God's wisdom, a hidden mystery, which God decreed before the ages for our glory ⁸and which none of the rulers of this age understood, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹But, as it is written,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
 nor the human heart conceived,
what God has prepared for those who love him”—

¹⁰God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹For what human knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. ¹²Now we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. ¹³And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.

¹⁴Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny.

¹⁶“For who has known the mind of the Lord
 so as to instruct him?”

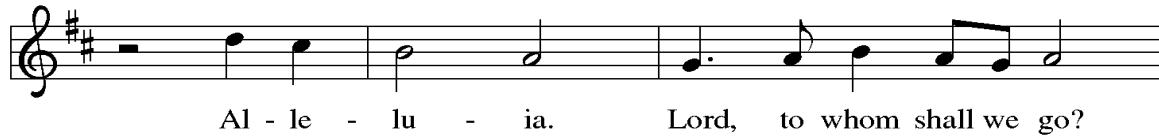
But we have the mind of Christ.

The Word of the Lord,

Thanks be to God.

STAND

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.

Matthew 5:13-20

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus encourages his followers to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, doing good works and keeping God's commandments.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the fifth chapter:

13 “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

14 “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. **15** People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. **16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. **18** For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. **19** Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. **20** For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SIT

**Sermon – “Believed in Throughout the World, Part 2:
Grace Through You” – Pastor Bo Bannister**

STAND

Hymn: Rise, Shine, You People! – ELW 665 (Red Book)

- 1 Rise, shine, you people! Christ the Lord has entered our human story; God in him is centered. He comes to us, by death and sin surrounded, with grace unbounded.
- 2 See how he sends the pow'rs of evil reeling; he brings us freedom, light and life and healing. All men and women, who by guilt are driven, now are forgiven.
- 3 Come, celebrate; your banners high unfurling, your songs and prayers against the darkness hurling. To all the world go out and tell the story of Jesus' glory.
- 4 Tell how the Father sent the Son to save us. Tell of the Son, who life and freedom gave us. Tell how the Spirit calls from ev'ry nation God's new creation.

Text: Ronald A. Klug, b. 1939, alt.
Text © 1974 Augsburg Publishing House, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

The Apostles' Creed

With the whole church let us 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.

Prayers of Intercession

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

A brief silence.

Your church does ministry in many and various ways. Keep the baptized true to the mind of Christ, that our works and witness bring hope to a troubled world. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Your marvelous creation cries out to you. Restore polluted air, soil, and water sources to wholeness. Guard honeybees, elephants, great whales and songbirds from harm, and renew the face of the earth. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Your people in every nation suffer injustice, poverty, and the threat of violence. Guide those in authority to govern with compassion, and bring peace to war zones. We pray for our enemies. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Your blessings are poured out for all in need. Help and heal any who experience trauma, discrimination, disease, hunger, abuse, or persecution. Comfort those who are sick or grieving. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Your wisdom guides this congregation and its ministries. Sustain our ordained leaders, staff, lay leaders, and volunteers. Form us to be salt and light for the neighbors we serve, following the example of Christ. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Your saints rejoice at your heavenly banquet. We give thanks for their lives of faith, trusting that we also will be embraced by your eternal love. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.

Amen.

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please share a sign of peace with one another.

SIT

Announcements

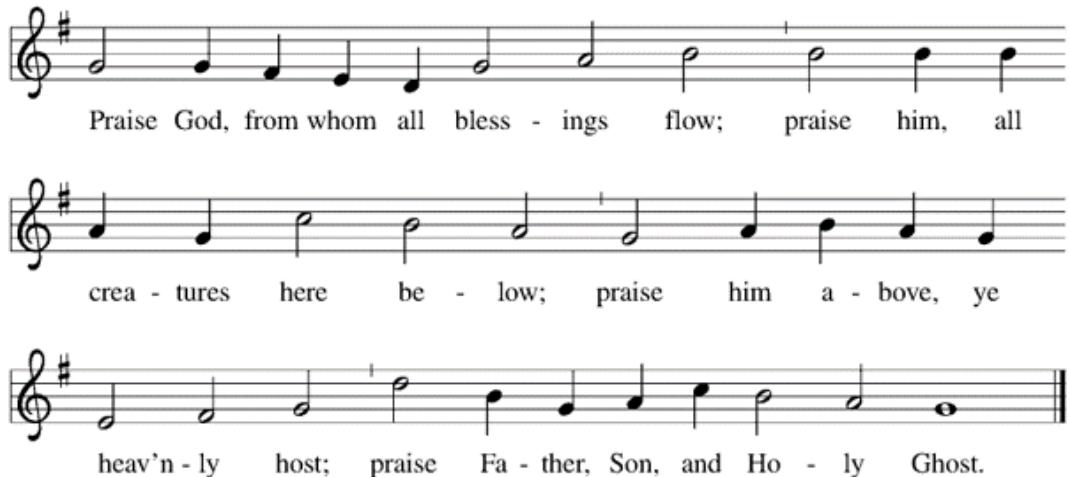
Printed copies of our weekly announcements are available at the usher's stand in the Narthex, and monthly newsletters are on the Hospitality Table. Please include your email address on your yellow attendance card to receive announcements electronically.

Children's Message

Offering

STAND

Offertory Hymn: Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow – ELW 885 (Red Book)



Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heav'n-ly host; praise Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Ghost.

Offering Prayer

God of majesty, no eye has seen, no ear has heard what you have prepared for those who love you, yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy. Use what we have gathered to feed us with the reign of God come near, 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.

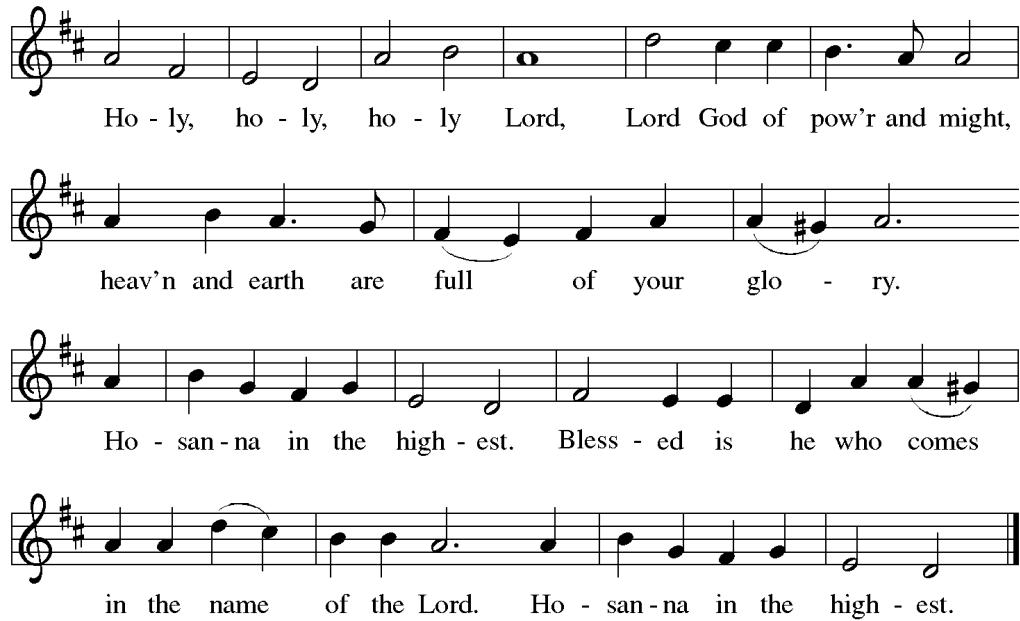
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God through our Savior Jesus Christ. In being baptized by John in Jordan's waters, Jesus took his place with sinners, and your voice proclaimed him as your Son. Like a dove, the Spirit descended upon him, anointing him as the Christ, to bring good news to the poor and proclaim release to the captives, to restore sight to the blind and free the oppressed. We praise you that in our baptism we are joined to Christ and, with all the baptized, are called to share his

ministry. Therefore we join our voices with all the baptized through all times and places, as well as all creation, both visible and invisible, to proclaim the glory of your name:

Sanctus



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.

Eucharistic Prayer

Without any doubt, the mystery of godliness is great:

Christ was revealed in flesh, vindicated in spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among gentiles, believed in throughout the world, taken up in glory.

While on earth, to the very end, Jesus loved those whom he had been given, and prayed that his love, his joy, and his closeness with his heavenly Father might be in them. On the night he was betrayed, he took bread, and having blessed it, he broke it and gave it to his beloved friends, saying, “Take, eat, this is my body which was given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way he took wine and, having given thanks for it, poured it out and gave the cup to them, saying, “Drink this, all of you. This is my blood which is poured out for you and for all. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.”

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

God, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ.

Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ, to the praise of your Name.

Remember, Lord, your one holy catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of your Christ. Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace.

And grant that we may find our inheritance with all the saints who have found favor with you in ages past. We praise you in union with them and give you glory through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.

Amen.

And now, as Christ our Savior has taught us, we are bold to pray:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

SIT

Invitation to Communion

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! Come to the table; taste and see.

Distribution of the Elements

Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace, grant us peace.

STAND

Post-Communion Blessing

The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you keep you in his Grace.

Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Radiant God, we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. In the sacrament of his body and blood you have drawn us to your heart. Send us from this table with delight,

that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love, and bear witness to all we have seen and heard, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Blessing

May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise + bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Hymn: Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service – ELW 712 (Red Book)

- 1 Lord, whose love in humble service bore the weight of human need, who upon the cross, forsaken, worked your mercy's perfect deed: we, your servants, bring the worship not of voice alone, but heart; consecrating to your purpose ev'ry gift which you impart.
- 2 Still your children wander homeless; still the hungry cry for bread; still the captives long for freedom; still in grief we mourn our dead. As you, Lord, in deep compassion healed the sick and freed the soul, by your Spirit send your power to our world to make it whole.
- 3 As we worship, grant us vision, till your love's revealing light in its height and depth and greatness dawns upon our quickened sight, making known the needs and burdens your compassion bids us bear, stirring us to ardent service, your abundant life to share.
- 4 Called by worship to your service, forth in your dear name we go, to the child, the youth, the aged, love in living deeds to show; hope and health, good will and comfort, counsel, aid and peace we give, that your servants, Lord, in freedom may your mercy know and live.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901-1984
Text © 1961 Oxford University Press.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

Thanks be to God.

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