



“...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

~Matthew 5:16

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
5th Sunday After Epiphany – February 8, 2026
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Mars, PA 16046-0411

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Rev. Katie McNeal, Presiding Minister
Maizy Fisher, Director of Music Ministries

*We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning!
Know that you are welcome here just as you are.*

If you are looking for a church to call home, why not consider making this one your own? If this is your first time worshipping at St. John, please fill out the visitor information card stapled to your bulletin.

*Everything you need to follow worship can be found in this bulletin. As you are comfortable, please rise when there is an * and join in the congregational responses, noted in **bold**. All songs are marked with numbers. The red book in the pew has all the songs. Look for the large number in the upper corner of the page to find the correct song.*

*During the time of **Peace**, you are invited to turn to those around you and offer a word of peace. We suggest a handshake and saying, "Peace be with you." You are also welcomed to offer another gesture of peace (wave, fist-bump, smile, etc.). Hand sanitizer is available in each pew.*

*At the time of **Offering**, you are invited to share a gift. Envelopes are available in the pews if you prefer. Online gifts may be made using the QR code below:*



*You may also offer updates to our ongoing prayer list using the yellow cards in the pews and placing them in the offering plates. **Visitor information cards** and member attendance cards (attached to the front of the bulletin) may also be placed in the offering plates.*

*As Lutherans, we believe Christ is truly present in the elements of the Lord's Supper. At the time of **Holy Communion**, all baptized individuals are welcome to come forward via the center aisle, receive the elements, and return via the side aisles. We begin at the front of the right side, commune all on the right side, then we will invite the left side forward. When you come forward, you may receive the bread from the pastor (gluten free wafers are available), then pre-filled cups with wine or grape juice from the assisting minister. You may consume the elements after receiving them then place the empty cup in the tray held by the acolyte. Those who do not receive Holy Communion are welcome to come forward for a blessing.*

*If you need a **restroom**, restrooms are located on the bottom floor at the far side of the building from the elevator. Restrooms may be accessed either via the stairs in the rear of the sanctuary, the stairs by the Greeting Area, or the elevator.*

*A **playroom** is available downstairs for children who need a break from the worship service. This room is by the elevator on the lower level. An adult must remain with the child. Children are also welcome to utilize the books and puzzles available in the Greeting Area on the top level by the elevator.*

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to fill out the blue prayer request forms located in each pew. The cards will be collected during our hymn of the day, and prayers will be offered during the prayers of intercession.

PRELUDE and ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

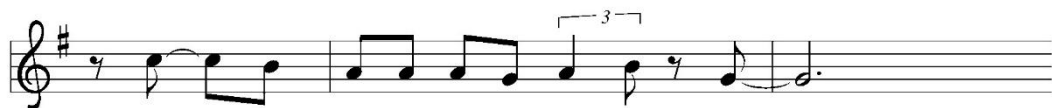
*GATHERING SONG *We are Marching in the Light* (ELW 866)



Si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen - khos', si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha -
We are march - ing in the light of God, we are march - ing in the



nyen' kwen - khos'. Si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen - khos',
light of God. We are march - ing in the light of God,



si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen - khos'.
we are march - ing in the light of God.



Si - ya - ham - ba (ham - ba, si - ya - ham - ba) oo
We are march - ing (march - ing, we are march - ing) oo



si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen - khos'.
we are march - ing in the light of God.



Si - ya - ham - ba (ham - ba, si - ya - ham - ba) oo
We are march - ing (march - ing, we are march - ing) oo



si - ya - hamb' e - ku - kha - nyen' kwen - khos'.
we are march - ing in the light of God.

Verse 2: We are dancing...

Verse 3: We are praying...

Verse 4: We are singing...

***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.

*THIS IS THE FEAST

Refrain

This is the feast of vic - t'ry for our God, for the

Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be

peo - ple of God. Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and

Refrain

hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his. This is the feast of

vic - t'ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign. Al -

le - lu - ia. 2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and

join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,

glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Final refrain

This is the feast of vic - t'ry for our God, for the

Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

***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.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 58:1-9a

A reading from Isaiah.

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.

^{9a} Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;

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

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

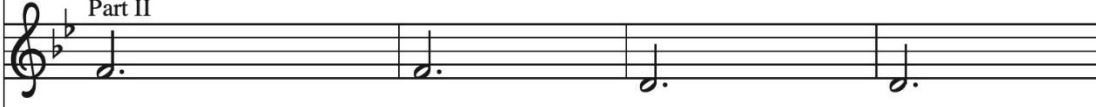
SUNG RESPONSE: What Dodes the Lord Require of You? (ACS 1057)

Part I



What does the Lord re - quire of you?

Part II



Jus - tice, kind - ness,

Part III



To seek jus - tice and love kind - ness

What does the Lord re - quire of you?

walk hum - bly with your God.

and walk hum - bly with your God.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 2:1-12

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

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

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

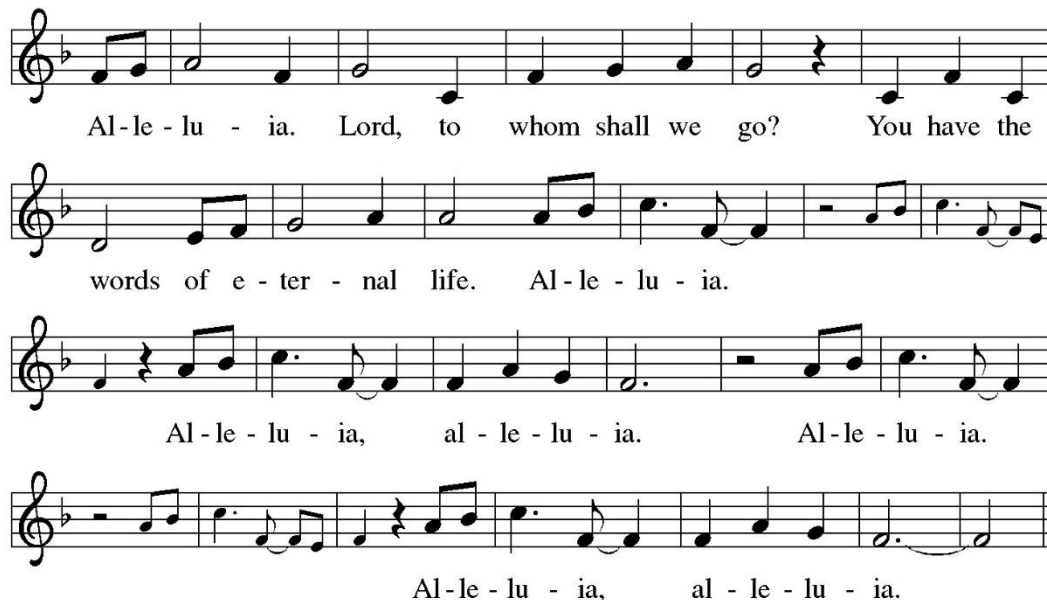
“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived,
what God has prepared for those who love him”—

¹⁰ God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹ For 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. ¹² Now 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*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.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

***GOSPEL READING: Matthew 5:13-20**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] 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.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY *Jesus, the Light of the World* (ACS 914)**

(Blue prayer cards are collected during the song.)



1 Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, Je-sus, the Light of the world;
2 Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; Je-sus, the Light of the world;
3 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Je-sus, the Light of the world;
4 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Je-sus, the Light of the world;



"Glo - ry to the new-born king," Je-sus, the Light of the world.
join the tri - umph of the skies; Je-sus, the Light of the world.
Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord! Je-sus, the Light of the world.
Hail the Sun of righ-teous-ness! Je-sus, the Light of the world.

Refrain



We'll walk in the light, beau-ti-ful light, come where the dew-drops of mer-cy are bright.



Shine all a-round us by day and by night, Je-sus, the Light of the world.

***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 animals, especially endangered or at risk species 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 especially Geneva, Cherry, Winnie, Henry, Harry, Sally, Debi, Anne, Karen, Nan, Beverly, those on our prayer list, all whom we remember aloud or in our hearts and all who suffer in any way. 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.**

God our life, look upon us with your everlasting mercy, and receive the prayers gathered before you now (*blue prayer cards are read*). We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people. **Amen.**

***SHARING THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Let us share God's peace with one another

You are invited to turn to those around you and offer a word of peace as we prepare to receive God's grace in communion. We suggest a handshake and saying, "Peace be with you." You are also welcome to offer another gesture of peace (wave, fist-bump, smile, etc.).

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

You are invited to support the ministries of this congregation through gifts and prayers at this time. Ongoing prayer requests, connection cards, communion records, and financial gifts are collected in the plates as we remember that we offer all of ourselves to God.

OFFERTORY HYMN *Lord, Speak to Us, That We May Speak* (ELW 676)

**Rise on verse 4*



1 Lord, speak to us, that we may speak in
2 Oh, lead us, Lord, that we may lead the
3 Oh, teach us, Lord, that we may teach the
4 Oh, fill us with your full - ness, Lord, un -



liv - ing ech - oes of your tone; as you have sought, so
wan-d'ring and the wa - v'ring feet; oh, feed us, Lord, that
pre - cious truths which you im - part; and wing our words, that
til our ver - y hearts o'er - flow in kin - dling thought and



let us seek your stray - ing chil - dren, lost and lone.
we may feed your hun - g'ring ones with man - na sweet.
they may reach the hid - den depths of man - y a heart.
glow - ing word, your love to tell, your praise to show.

*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 is 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.

By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;
and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Blessed are you, O holy God: you are the Life and Light of all.
By your powerful word you created all things.
Through the prophets you called your people to be a light to the nations.

Blessed are you for Jesus, your Son.
He is your Light, shining in our darkness and revealing to us your mercy and might.
In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his preaching and healing,
his dying and rising, and his promise to come again,
we await that day when all the universe will rejoice in your holy and life-giving light.

By your Spirit bless us and this meal, that, refreshed with this heavenly food,
we may be light for the world, revealing the brilliance of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray.

**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**

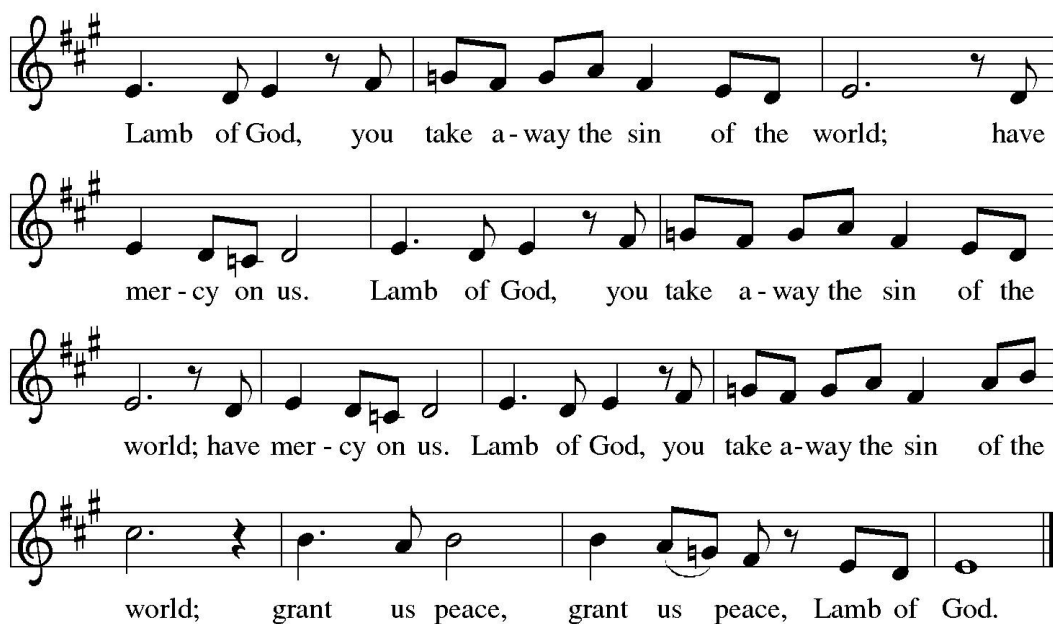
***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

At Jesus' table, heaven and earth are joined as one. Come and see!

Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life, and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. In response to Jesus' invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine. Those who do not receive the bread and wine are invited to come forward for a blessing.

Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available upon request. Communion may also be brought back to the pews for those who are unable to come forward.

COMMUNION SONG *Lamb of God*

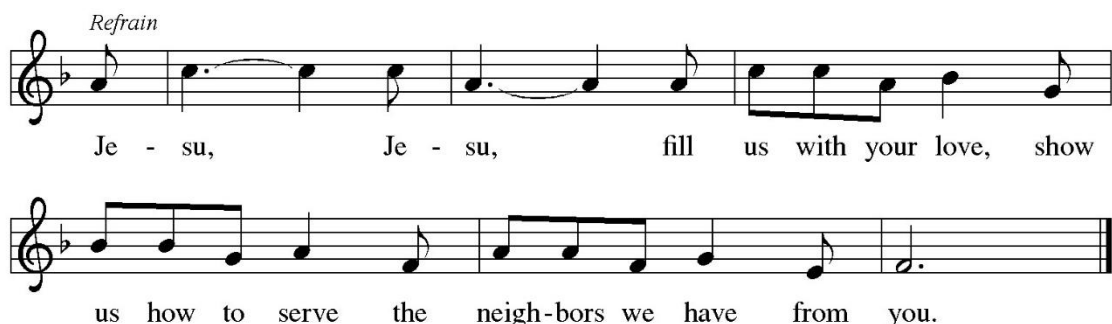


Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN *Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love* (ELW 708)

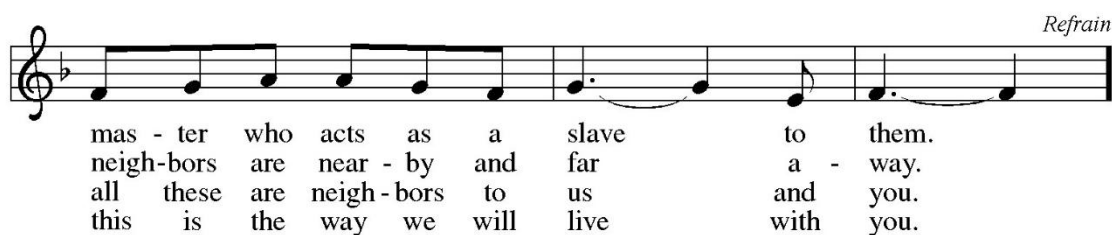
Refrain



Je - su, Je - su, fill us with your love, show
us how to serve the neigh-bors we have from you.

1 Kneels at the feet of his friends, si - lent - ly wash - es their feet,
2 Neigh-bors are wealth-y and poor, var - ied in col - or and race,
3 These are the ones we will serve, these are the ones we will love;
4 Kneel at the feet of our friends, si - lent - ly wash-ing their feet:

Refrain



mas - ter who acts as a slave to them.
neigh-bors are near - by and far a - way.
all these are neigh-bors to us and you.
this is the way we will live with you.

COMMUNION HYMN *Light Shone in Darkness* (ELW 307)



1 Light shone in dark - ness at the world's cre - a - tion,
 2 Light shone in dark - ness at the new cre - a - tion;
 3 Light shines in dark - ness till the full cre - a - tion;



bath - ing in beau - ty na-ture's rev - e - la - tion. All that has be - ing,
 Christ rose in glo - ry, won for us sal - va - tion. Sing, earth and heav - en,
 Christ's bod - y, groan - ing, suf - fers trib - u - la - tion, longs for God's jus - tice,



cry in ad - o - ra - tion, "Praise for the light. A - men!"
 hymns of ju - bi - la - tion, praise for the light. A - men!
 glob - al trans - for - ma - tion, prays for the light. A - men!

COMMUNION HYMN *This Is Christ's Body* (ELW 540)



This is Christ's bod - y, bro - ken and blest. Feed us with



mer - cy and love. We are Christ's bod - y,



bro - ken and blest. Heal us and make us one.

*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

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.**


SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

*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.**

*SENDING SONG *Go, Make Disciples* (ELW 540)



“Go, make dis - ci - ples, bap - tiz - ing them, teach - ing them.

Go, make dis - ci - ples, for I am with you till the end of time.

Go, be the salt of the earth. Go, be the light for the world.

Go, be a cit - y on a hill, so all can see that you’re

serv - ing me. Go, make dis - ci - ples.”

*DISMISSAL

“May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus . . . May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing. (*Romans 15:5, 13*)

Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.
Thanks be to God.

Assisting in worship today:

Assisting Minister: Casey S

Acolyte: Josie W

Offering: Anna K and Nathan K

Notes for the day's texts:

We are nearing the end of the season after Epiphany. The missional emphasis of this season shines like a beacon of light and hope in the dead of winter, bringing good news in the middle of this world's not-so-good news. This week God provides the mission in Isaiah—feed the hungry, care for the homeless, clothe the naked. Upon accomplishing this mission God tells the people, “Your light shall break forth like the dawn.” Paul continues his Spirit-led mission, encouraging the church in Corinth, “No eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him.” Jesus teaches his disciples, “You are the light of the world. . . . Let your light shine before others” (Matt. 5:14, 16). Through these words in Jesus’ sermon, he gives followers of every day and age a mission to share the light which scatters the darkness.

Whether you are looking in the news or out the window, things may seem pretty dark and dreary at this time of year, but do not miss the light of Epiphany! We are indeed created in God’s image, therefore the spark of the divine is alive in all of us. The light shines through us as we live out God’s mission for our lives each day. As Epiphany continues, we should all be prepared to let our light shine and share the good news.

Today's Music

We are Marching in the Light. Text: South African traditional; tr. Freedom Is Coming, 1984, Music: South African traditional; arr. Freedom Is Coming. Walton Music/ Public Domain.

What Does the Lord Require of You? Text: Jim Strathdee, b. 1941, Music: Jim Strathdee. Desert Flower Music.

Jesus, the Light of the World, Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, stanzas; George D. Elderkin, 1845–1928, refrain. Music: Traditional; arr. George D. Elderkin. Public Domain.

Lord, Speak to Us, That We May Speak. Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836-1879, alt., Music: Robert Schumann, 1810-1856. Public Domain.

Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love. Text: Tom Colvin, 1925-2000, alt., Music: Ghanaian folk tune, adapt. Tom Colvin. Hope Publishing Company (ASCAP).

Light Shone in Darkness. Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939, Music: Mark Sedio, b. 1954. GIA Publications, Inc. / Augsburg Fortress
This Is Christ's Body. Text: Anne Krentz Organ, b. 1960, Music: Anne Krentz Organ. Augsburg Fortress.

Go, Make Disciples. Text: Handt Hanson, b. 1950, Music: Handt Hanson. Prince of Peace Publishing, Changing Church Forum, Inc.

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Next Week's Readings

Exodus 24:12-18 *Moses enters the cloud of God's glory on Mount Sinai*

Psalms 2 *You are my son; this day have I begotten you. (Ps. 2:7)*

2 Peter 1:16-21 *The apostle's message confirmed on the mount of transfiguration*

Matthew 17:1-9 *Revelation of Christ as God's beloved Son*