

February 8, 2026 - Fifth Sunday After Epiphany

Welcome & Announcements Liturgical Colour for Epiphany: Green is a cool colour, evoking nature, growth, vitality, freshness, harmony, endurance, and fertility. It is associated with healing and rest. It is the depth and stability of blue combined with the warmth and joy of yellow.

Creation Connection Light comes in many forms. Human eyes can typically only perceive light between 380 and 740 nanometers, with infrared and ultraviolet beyond our capacity to experience. However, infrared and ultraviolet do exist. What lies beyond our present "sight," beyond our comprehension, beyond our personal experience, and beyond our rational explanations? How are x-rays, CAT scans, and ultrasounds able to see what is inside of us physically? It is no wonder that God can also see through us, both physically and spiritually!

Lighting of the Christ Candle Christ is the Light of the World. On Epiphany the wise men followed the illumination of the Christ light, a star, from their homes far in the east, the same direction from which our sun rises each day. They knew through their wisdom, calculations and science that something amazing was going to happen in the spot illuminated by this celestial body. They found the source of this light which God had blessed into the world. Jesus' light shines in and with us each and every day. Today as we relight the Christ candle, we do so to honour and remember that this light of love was given for us and will never be extinguished.

ALL: Jesus illuminates our lives, our hearts and our way. Let us be true to the pathway which He sets out for us.
Amen.

Prayer for Illumination Loving Creator God, we come today from the busyness and the darknesses of our lives, stepping out from the lack of light into the brilliance of your presence, knowing that You are God's present to us. Open our minds and very essences to realizing that Your radiance and warmth, Your joy and glow, are ours for the asking, that Your words serve to bless and guide us, that Your sacrifice have purchased for us an undeserved boon of God's Grace. Let our service today, and Your Holy Words, kindle anew the flames within us, to sustain us in the hours and days to come, so that our glow can also be beacon of all that is good in you, to others and to the world. Amen.

Gathering Hymn Great is Thy Faithfulness, VU # 288

Great is thy faithfulness, God our Creator; There is no shadow of turning with thee; Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not; As thou hast been thou forever wilt be.	Refrain Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see; All I have needed thy hand hath provided. Great is thy faithfulness, ever to me!	Summer and winter and springtime and harvest; Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above Join with all nature in manifold witness To thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love Refrain	Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth; Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide, Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, Wondrous the portion thy blessings provide. Refrain
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Call to Worship

L: Arise, your light has come,

P: **The mountains burst in song.**

L: The churches and the hills ring loudly in celebration,

P: **Jesus has been born, has been baptized, and revealed to the world.**

L: Leader, teacher, rabbi, and friend

P: **Jesus comes to stand with us all: the poor, the oppressed, the lonely,**

L: To comfort, to inspire, to heal, and to teach.

P: **We come to be comforted, inspired, healed, and taught.**

L: Let us always be eager students and listeners,

P: **Soaking in the words, the music, the prayers, and Jesus' light.**

ALL: Let us welcome the changes which God continues to evoke and create in us, to make us blessed, sharing sojourners in His world.

Ministry of Music Celebrating Black History Month with Amazing Grace

Hymn Lord, Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary, MVU # 18

Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary,
Pure and holy tried and true;

With thanksgiving, I'll be a living
Sanctuary for you.

Children's Ministry Cartoon Balloons! Cartoon characters have light bulbs come on over their heads when they have an idea. Inside the light bulb is revealed what they are thinking at that moment of inspiration. How many "light bulbs" do you imagine popping up over the heads of people during worship? "Lift up your heads!" we are exhorted in the Psalms. What will we discover when we pay attention? Is the universe filled with light? Is the sanctuary a place for illumination? What happens or can happen when we gather together with so much "light" and inspiration around us? Maybe post paper cut-outs of light bulbs around the sanctuary and invite people to write or draw their inspirations.

The Lord's Prayer -spoken

Offering Invitation & Prayer In our offering today we have a wonderful opportunity. Let us be of one mind and one purpose; that we will each be generous and give as we are able. By doing this, not only will great good be achieved, but we will grow closer to the One who calls us.

We thank you, loving God, that you have called each of us, together, to follow your way in Jesus. Bless these gifts, and those given through PAR and online, as steps that bring us closer to you. Amen.

Children leave for Sunday School

Scripture Readings

Isaiah 9: 1-4

Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honour Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan. The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.

Psalms 27: 1, 4-9 VU # 754-5

L: God is my light and my salvation, whom, then, shall I fear?

P: God is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?

L: When the wicked close in to devour me,

P: It is they, my enemies and my foes, who stumble and fall.

L: If an army should encamp against me, my heart shall not be afraid;

P: If war should arise against me, even then I will not be dismayed.

Sung Response:

God is my light and saving health, I shall not be afraid.

L: One thing I have asked of God, for which I long: that I may dwell in God's house all the days of my life,

P: To gaze on your beauty, O God, and to seek you in your temple.

L: For in the time of trouble you will give me shelter;

P: You will hide me under the cover of your tent, you will set me high upon a rock.

L: And now you have raised my head above my enemies round about me.

P: Therefore I will offer in your dwelling a sacrifice with great gladness.

Sung Response:

God is my light and saving health, I shall not be afraid.

L: Hear my voice, O God, when I call, have mercy and answer me. Your face, O God, I seek.

P: Do not hide your face from me; do not reject your servant in anger, you, who have been my helper.

L: Do not cast me off, or forsake me, O God, my Saviour.

P: Though my father and mother forsake me, my God will take me up.

Sung Response:

God is my light and saving health, I shall not be afraid.

L: Teach me your way, O God,

P: Lead me on a level path, safe from those who lie in wait for me.

L: Do not give me up to the will of my enemies

P: For liars and false witnesses arise against me.

L: I believe that I shall see God's goodness in the land of the living.

P: Wait for God; be strong and take courage; yes, wait for God!

Sung Response:

God is my light and saving health, I shall not be afraid.

Matthew 4: 12-23 - Jesus Begins His Ministry

When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee. Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali - to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah: "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles - the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned." From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." At once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James, son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

Message: *Illumination: The Extent and Depth of God's Messages for Us*

In our reading today from Isaiah, we read that, "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." In his gospel Matthew quotes this ancient prophecy, and then continues to relate the beginning of Jesus' ministry: "From that time on Jesus began to preach, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'" As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." Jesus is the light who has come to banish and to shine through the darkness, and the disciples are the ones chosen by God's own son to assist him to spread the brilliance of his Truth to all.

In this time of the year when the nights are still long, the Light of Christ continues shining in the midst of the shadows of night. Isaiah wrote of light shining in a time of tremendous fear. The psalmist writes of God being light and by that light bringing salvation to people caught up in a lack of hope. Even Matthew's gospel opens with the ominous note of John being arrested and then goes on to refer to Isaiah and the light. Can God be present in deep shadows of danger, fear, and despair? Of course! How has God been present in these times? Why does Matthew call us back to the Isaiah reading? Is he trying to remind us of God's faithfulness? Has God been faithfully present through all time, even as the circumstances changed, and can God continue to be? Does the light of God extend beyond the wavelengths that we are able to experience? In the world today, in our society, through our musicians, our poets, our writers, God continues to present us with wondrous light. Offer some examples of music, poetry, and writing that bring light and hope to your spirit, especially when you are feeling sad, afraid, or despairing.

Pastoral Prayers: O Lord, in this long, dark winter season, with its extremely short days and terribly long, bitter nights, we crave both light and warmth. We have been huddled in our homes, stoking our fireplaces and running our furnaces, attempting to thaw our bodies and our spirits. In the midst of this usually dark season, you have gifted us with a long stretch of brilliant, sunny days, with the brilliant sunshine causing the fresh layers of the seemingly endless, torrent of fragile, crystalline snowflakes that flutter down from the sky. Those crystals which are freely blown about by the winds, gifting us with days at home with schools and businesses closed, as driving conditions have been too slippery or vision impaired by the drifting whiteness that can obliterate all landmarks and familiar sights. If we were bears or groundhogs we could be hibernating for this season when all-natural growth has been paused, but instead we are awake, alert, although perhaps somewhat sleepy or drowsy. On these sunny, almost blinding days, when we wear our sunglasses to moderate the sparkle and glistening of so much vivid whiteness and brightness, the luminosity and radiance of the snow call to mind Your Son.

Your Son, the divine come to live among us, as one of us, is truly the light of our world, illuminating our lives with an unquenchable radiance that overwhelms the darkness that might overwhelm our days, and our sleeping hours. Jesus, born, baptized, and now having formed his fellow teachers and followers, his disciples, moves among us, and also within us, banishing fear, depression, anxiety, and ill-will, if we but unfold our blinders and spread out our hearts and minds as arms wide open to welcome Jesus' love, companionship, wisdom, patience, calmness, forbearance, and to hope and believe with all of our beings, our lives, our thoughts, and our actions. Light energizes and inspires us. Jesus is the light of our world. Let us rejoice in the Good News, the Gospel Truth, and our Hope that is in our Saviour, Jesus, our Christ. Amen.

Parting Hymn *Arise, Your Light is Come*, VU # 79

Arise, your light is come! The Spirit's call obey; Show forth the glory of your God, Which shines on you today.	Arise, your light is come! Fling wide the prison door; Proclaim the captive's liberty, Good tidings to the poor.	Arise, your light is come! All you in sorrow born, Bind up the broken-hearted ones And comfort those who mourn.	Arise, your light is come! The mountains burst in song! Rise up like eagles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.
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Commissioning And Benediction Each breath that we take is called inspiration, the taking in of life-giving oxygen, which our body miraculously uses to power itself. When we breathe in God's love, a different form of inspiration takes place, transforming our thoughts and behaviours if we but truly and deeply take these messages and feelings into our very souls. We are blessed this day and all days by God's 'inspirational,' motivating and stimulating essence, extended to us through Jesus, our Christ, and God's Son. Let our spirits be aroused this week to live out our mission as Christians. For they will know that we are Christians by our love.

Choral Benediction *God Be With You 'til We Meet Again*, VU # 422

God be with you 'til we meet again; Loving counsels guide, uphold you, With a shepherd's care enfold you; God be with you 'til we meet again.	Refrain "til we meet, 'til we meet, 'til we meet at Jesus' feet; 'til we meet, 'til we meet, God me with 'til we meet again.	God be with 'til we meet again; When life's perils thick confound you, Put unfailing arms around you: God be with 'til we meet again. Refrain
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Choral Amen