

St. Paul Lutheran Church
of Stillwater, Minnesota
February 8, 2026
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany



Your presence at worship is important to God and to us! Whether you are a first-time visitor, frequent participant, neighbor, member, or friend, please take a moment as you prepare for worship to share some information on the "Welcome to Worship" card included with your bulletin. Place it in the offering plate at the time the offering is received.

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.

Many of our worship materials are taken from the red Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW). Page numbers are located in the front half of the book, and hymn numbers are located in the back half of the book.

The assembly **speaks** or **sings** the bold responses.

GATHERING

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

Prelude

Invocation

We begin in the name we are born children of God,
in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the
Holy Spirit.

Amen.

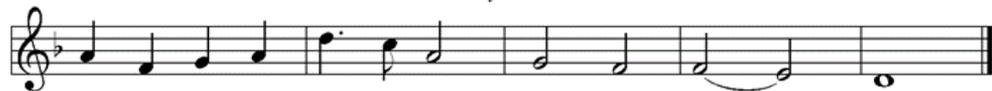
Kyrie



A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: **B** Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:



A Chri - ste e - le - i - son: **B** Christ, have mer - cy.
Christ, have mer - cy:

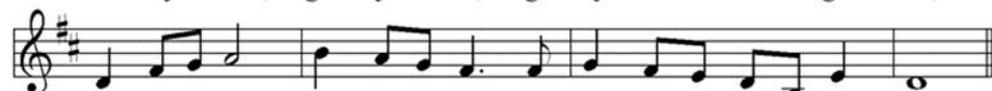


A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: **B** Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:

Gloria



B Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God in the high - est;



glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



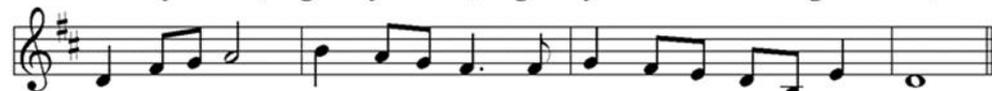
I Lord God, heav - en - ly king, al - might - y God and Fa - ther, we



wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



B Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God in the high - est;



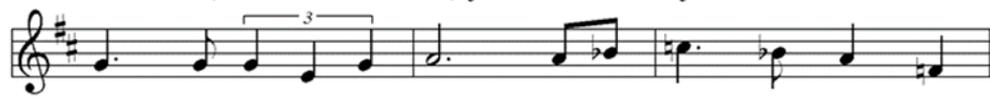
glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



II Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, 2



Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



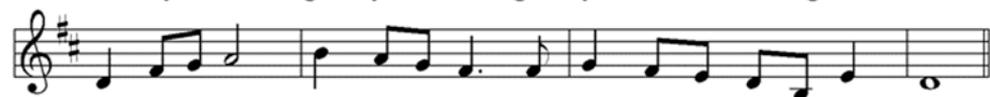
world: have mer - cy on us; you are seat - ed at the



right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



☩ Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God in the high - est;



glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



☩ For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly



Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther, A - men.



☩ Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God in the high - est;



glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth,



and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

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.

Prayer of the Day

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

Pew Bible: Old Testament Pages 688-689

Isaiah 58:1-9a [9b-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.*

At the conclusion:

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.



Hallelujah

Psalm 112:1-9 [10]

The refrain is sung first by the soloist, then repeated by all as indicated (R).



- 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. **R**
- 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. **R**
- 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. **R**

1 Corinthians 2:1-12 [13-16]

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.

At the conclusion:

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.



Children's and Outreach Message

Jenny Brelje

Gospel Acclamation



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 gospel is introduced:

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At the conclusion:

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Laurel Halvorson Bernard

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

Hymn of the Day

ELW hymn 540

"Go, Make Disciples"

Prayers of Intercession

After each prayer:

Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

At the conclusion:

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.

All are invited to greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Offering

Our offering is a collection of money for the church's mission, including the care of those in need, as a sign of the giving of our whole selves in grateful response for all God's gifts. Your offering and "Welcome to Worship" card may be placed in the offering plate. The QR code on the right may be used if you wish to give electronically.



Offering Hymn

ELW hymn 798

"Will You Come and Follow Me?"

Offering Prayer

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, 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 . . .

. . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



(Continued on the next page.) 8

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.

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 . . .

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks . . .

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 as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

© 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.

Communion

We celebrate at an open communion table. All who hear our Lord's invitation are welcome to participate. Receive the bread first with an open hand and eat immediately, followed by the juice (white) or wine (red). Gluten-free bread is available at the front end of the center aisle. Please indicate to an usher if you need to receive communion from your pew. Children who have received age-appropriate instruction are welcome to commune. If you prefer instead to receive a blessing, please indicate by crossing your arms over your shoulders.

*When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say:
The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.*

and each person may respond:

Amen.



Communion Song

ELW hymn 712

"Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service"

Prayer After Communion

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SENDING

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

Announcements

Charge and Blessing

Go out into the world in peace;
have courage;
hold on to what is good;
return no one evil for evil;
strengthen the fainthearted;
support the weak, and help the suffering;
honor all people;
love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

Amen.



Sending Song

"Jesus, the Light of the World"



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.



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.



Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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DAILY PRAYER

Grace to Receive the Word

Blessed Lord God, you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life, which you have given us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

CONNECTIONS WITH THE LITURGY

Shine Your Light!

At the welcome to the newly baptized (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, page 231), we hear reminders of today's gospel reading. Option 1 connects the Gospel of Matthew's words about light with the Gospel of John's: our light comes from the Light that is Christ. Option 2 quotes Matthew 5:16: our light draws people, not to ourselves, but to our Father in heaven.

CATECHISM CONNECTION

Going the Extra Mile

Luther's teachings on the Ten Commandments echo the Sermon of the Mount by Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew. Keeping the law is not merely "staying out of trouble" but going the extra mile, perhaps even creating "good trouble." For example, when a neighbor faces injustice, it's not enough to stay out of trouble with the designated keepers of justice. Living in God's kingdom, we ought to go the extra mile in helping our neighbors. On the Eighth Commandment, "You shall not bear false witness," Luther says, "We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light."

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

**Cyril, monk, died 869; Methodius, bishop, died 885;
missionaries to the Slavs
Saturday, February 14, 2026**

These two brothers from Thessalonika, Greece, were monks and were sent to bring Christianity to the Slavic people. In the course of their work they created a written language, inventing the Cyrillic alphabet for it, and translated the Bible and the liturgy.

GOSPEL MESSAGE The Lamp Is Already Lit

“This little light of mine, I’m goin’-a let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine” (ELW 677). There’s nothing quite like the joyous call and response of a whole congregation singing together the words of this beloved African American spiritual. The text and tune make it very hard to keep any lamps under a bushel basket!

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus calls us to “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). Many congregations use these words during the rite of Holy Baptism. But “Let your light shine” doesn’t imply that the light belongs only to us or to the church. The first chapter of Genesis clarifies this. At the beginning of creation, God speaks light into existence, making light God’s first gift to the whole world. In that light, God creates everything, including humankind, which is made in the divine image, according to God’s likeness.

Living in harmony with God’s word, letting our light shine with “good works” that glorify God, is not about striving for perfection. Because God’s light has existed from the beginning, it is not something we earn or achieve for ourselves. We don’t provide the spark that lights the lamp—it is already lit by God. Our job is to let the light shine. To be light for the world, then, is to be none other than who we have been from the beginning. Therein lies not only the fulfillment of God’s word, but also our own fulfillment as God’s children and light-bearers in the world.