

## **You are salt and light – Volunteer thank you 2026**

3 cups of flour...

You start with flour. Wheat or rice. Grain. Grain that fell to the earth and died, reborn as a new stalk, and producing ten, a hundred, a thousand times more grain in its new life. I give thanks to God today for all the people who are grains. People who make sacrifices in order for the greater good. People like you. Thank you. 2 tsp yeast... Then add leaven. A little yeast grows and spreads throughout the dough. It adds lightness, air, flavour. For leaven to work, it needs time. Rest. Space and warmth. But oh what magic happens with that patience. I thank God for the leaven in our lives. The people and animals who insist on slowing down and resting. The ones who know with some tender loving care, what starts off small becomes full of life, and larger than it began. Thank you for your faithfulness and time commitments. 2 tsp coarse salt...

Now add salt. God says we share a covenant of salt. A covenant of salt that happens around the dinner table, where salt is shared between host and guests, and seal that the guest is now protected. Kin. Family. Salt – in the bread, at the table, at peace– or salt in blood, in oaths and offerings, in war – salt given for another means we share our lives. Salt heals and preserves. Salt was used to rub a newborn clean and bless them. Salt – where we get the word ‘salary’ – as wealth. Salt as in worth your salt. Valuable. Precious. Salt that is required for offerings made to God. Salt that is essential to life. And salt brings out the best of everyone. Enhances the flavours of the world. Jesus said we are salt. We are the symbol of peace. We are the healers. We are precious. We are blessings. We bring out the best in others. Thank you, volunteers, for being salt. 1.5 cups very warm water All of these are washed with waters. Fresh waters. Living, not stagnant, waters. Water that flows. Water that cleanses. Water present at creation and continuing to be now – having flown through life and the world for millions of years. Water without which all life dies. Water carrying nutrients from mountains to valleys, and valleys to bays. Water in our bodies – water as blood and as tears. Water as saliva and spinal fluid and what cushions our brains and enables our thoughts. Water from the sky as snow and rain – gifts from above! And water from wells and springs and taps. Water saved and shared. And also baptismal waters. Blessed waters. Water where the holy and the mundane work together for the blessing of the world. Thank you, living waters in our community, for showering the world with your time, your presence, your gifts, and your resources.

Mix dough

Mix. Knead. Blend. Let there be moments of levity; and moments of rest. Let there be minerals and organics blending; let each specialize in themselves and bring out the best in each other. Let each bring their unique offering and become something larger. Let the sharing lead to wealth for all.

Let rest 2 or 3 hours

For as leaven teaches, we must combine times of work with times of play. Breathe in and also breathe out. Sleep and also wake. Sabbaths and working days. We are at our best when we are

balanced. We flourish, and grow. For all the work you do, may today be your rest day. And one of the many days of feeling how much you are appreciated.

Place dutch oven inside oven and heat to 230c/450f. While preheating, shape dough into a ball and place on parchment for easy moving. After the oven is preheated, transfer dough into the hot dutch oven, cover, and bake for 30 minutes. Remove cover and bake for 12.

What are modern ovens? Still a type of fire. Light. Heat. Flame that transforms the individual ingredients into one. Light that glows from coils and illuminates the wonder happening in the oven tomb. Heat that warms the bodies awaiting to break bread together and share the salt, the cup, the fruit. Rising hot air carries the fragrance of fresh bread like rising breaths carry prayers. Light to be shared. Heat to be shared. Life to be shared. Bread to be shared. Jesus said: you are salt and light. The kingdom of God is like leaven and living waters. He said: I am bread, broken and shared. I say: you are essential to being living bread for our community. You are essential for being steady light when things seem dim and confusing. You are essential to the preservation and healing of our world like salt is to preserving health and restoring health. You are a volunteer, which is to say, you are a disciple of Jesus the Christ. And your discipleship, your commitment to living into the realm Jesus proclaimed, is doing the world a lot of good.

Thank you. Thank you for all you do. Thank you for being salt and light for the world. Thank you. Amen.

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### Scripture Readings – Feb. 8, 2026 for LCUCPC

**Isaiah 58:1-9** - NRSV ue

#### False and True Worship

**58** Shout out; do not hold back!

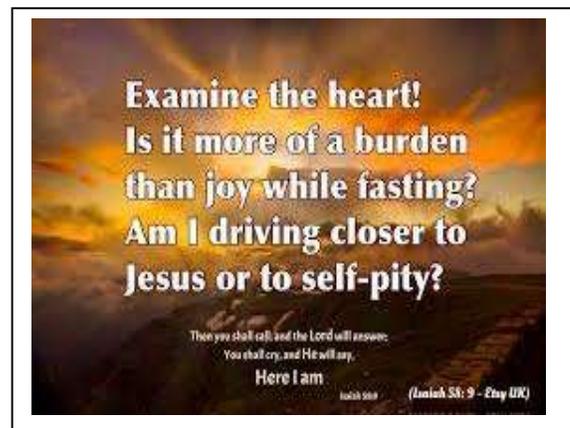
Lift up your voice like a trumpet!  
Announce to my people their rebellion,  
to the house of Jacob their sins.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> “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.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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?



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(continued....see next page)

Will you call this a fast,  
a day acceptable to the LORD?  
<sup>6</sup>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?  
<sup>7</sup>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?  
<sup>8</sup>Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator<sup>[b]</sup> shall go before you;  
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.  
<sup>9</sup>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,

**Matthew 5:13-20 NRSV**

### **Salt and Light**

<sup>13</sup> "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.

<sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> 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.

### **The Law and the Prophets**

<sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

May God's spirit shape our understanding of these words. **And may they awaken in our hearts**



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