

# Stewardship 2026

## Join the Journey

*"Trust in God from the bottom of your heart;  
don't try to figure out everything on your own.  
Listen for God's voice in everything you do,  
everywhere you go." Proverbs 3:4-6*



### WELCOME TO WORSHIP

#### Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

#### February 8, 2026

#### 8:00 AM Traditional Worship

**Pastor:** Paula Geister-Jones **Lay Ministry Administrator:** Jenny Hoffman

**Guest Preacher:** Sandy Grant

**Organist/Pianist:** Michelle Bolstad

**Lector:** Diane Matson

**Acolytes:** Greta Hanson & Graceyn Millhouse

**Ushers:** Jim Lunde, Gary Gullickson & Myron Sime

**Technical Support:** Thomas Lehr, Roger Slack

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.

### CALL TO WORSHIP

#### CONFESSİON AND FORGIVENESS:

**P:** 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.

**C: Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**P:** Mighty God, lover of justice,

**C: 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.**

**P:** 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 <sup>†</sup> Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace.

**C: Amen.**

*Stand*

**HYMN: "Gather Us In" ELW #532 Vss. 1,2 & 4**

**Vs. 1: Here in this place the new light is streaming,  
now is the darkness vanished away;  
see in this space our fears and our dreamings  
brought here to you in the light of this day.**  
**Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,  
gather us in, the blind and the lame;  
call to us now, and we shall awaken,  
we shall arise at the sound of our name.**

**Vs. 2: We are the young, our lives are a myst'ry,  
we are the old who yearn for your face;  
we have been sung throughout all of hist'ry,  
called to be light to the whole human race.**  
**Gather us in, the rich and the haughty,  
gather us in, the proud and the strong;  
give us a heart, so meek and so lowly,  
give us the courage to enter the song.**

**Vs. 4: Not in the dark of buildings confining,  
not in some heaven, light years away—  
here in this place the new light is shining,  
now is the kingdom, and now is the day.**  
**Gather us in and hold us forever,  
gather us in and make us your own;  
gather us in, all peoples together,**

**fire of love in our flesh and our bone.**

**GREETING**

**P:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

**LITANY**

**P:** In the beginning was the Word,

**C: and the Word was with God and the Word was God.**

**P:** In the Word was life,

**C: and the life was the light of all people.**

**P:** The word became flesh and lived among us,

**C: and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.**

**HYMN OF PRAISE: “Arise, Your Light Has Come” ELW #314 Vss. 1,2 & 4**

**Vs. 1: Arise, your light has come! The Spirit's call obey;  
show forth the glory of your God which shines on you today.**

**Vs. 2: Arise, your light has come! Fling wide the prison door;  
proclaim the captive's liberty, good tidings to the poor.**

**Vs. 4: Arise, your light has come! The mountains burst in song!  
Rise up like eagles on the wing, God's pow'r will make us strong.**

**SALUTATION**

**P:** The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P:** Let us pray.

**C: 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*

## **FIRST READING: Isaiah 58:1-9**

1-3 “Shout! A full-throated shout! Hold nothing back—a trumpet-blast shout! Tell my people what’s wrong with their lives, face my family Jacob with their sins! They’re busy, busy, busy at worship, and love studying all about me. To all appearances they’re a nation of right-living people— law-abiding, God-honoring. They ask me, ‘What’s the right thing to do?’ and love having me on their side. But they also complain, ‘Why do we fast and you don’t look our way? Why do we humble ourselves and you don’t even notice?’ 3-5 “Well, here’s why: “The bottom line on your ‘fast days’ is profit. You drive your employees much too hard. You fast, but at the same time you bicker and fight. You fast, but you swing a mean fist. The kind of fasting you do won’t get your prayers off the ground. Do you think this is the kind of fast day I’m after: a day to show off humility? To put on a pious long face and parade around solemnly in black? Do you call *that* fasting, a fast day that I, God, would like? 6-9 “This is the kind of fast day I’m after: to break the chains of injustice, get rid of exploitation in the workplace, free the oppressed, cancel debts. What I’m interested in seeing you do is: sharing your food with the hungry, inviting the homeless poor into your homes, putting clothes on the shivering ill-clad, being available to your own families. Do this and the lights will turn on, and your lives will turn around at once. Your righteousness will pave your way. The God of glory will secure your passage. Then when you pray, God will answer. You’ll call out for help and I’ll say, ‘Here I am.’

**P:** The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

## **GOSPEL CANTICLE: “Open My Eyes, That I May See”**

**Open my eyes, that I may see  
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;  
Place in my hands the wonderful key  
That shall unclasp, and set me free.  
Silently now I wait for Thee,  
Ready my God, Thy will to see;  
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine.**

*The Gospel is announced...*

**P:** The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 5th Chapter.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

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

<sup>13</sup> “Let me tell you why you are here. You’re here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You’ve lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage.<sup>14-16</sup> “Here’s another way to put it: You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We’re going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don’t think I’m going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I’m putting you on a light stand. Now that I’ve put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you’ll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven. <sup>17-18</sup>

“Don’t suppose for a minute that I have come to demolish the scriptures—either God’s Law or the Prophets. I’m not here to demolish but to complete. I am going to put it all together, pull it all together in a vast panorama. God’s Law is more real and lasting than the stars in the sky and the ground at your feet. Long after stars burn out and earth wears out, God’s Law will be alive and working. <sup>19-20</sup> “Trivialize even the smallest item in God’s Law and you will only have trivialized yourself. But take it seriously, show the way for others, and you will find honor in the kingdom. Unless you do far better than the Pharisees in the matters of right living, you won’t know the first thing about entering the kingdom.

**P:** The gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Sit*

## **SERMON**

*Stand*

**HYMN: “Christ Be Our Light” ELW #715 vss. 1,3 & 4**

### **Christ, Be Our Light**



1 Long - ing for light, we wait in dark - ness. Long - ing for  
2 Long - ing for peace, our world is trou - bled. Long - ing for  
3 Long - ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long - ing for  
4 Long - ing for shel - ter, man - y are home - less. Long - ing for  
5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the

truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,  
 hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone  
 wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,  
 warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,  
 hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants

your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.  
 has pow'r to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.  
 bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.  
 shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.  
 to one an - oth - er, signs of your king - dom come.

*Refrain*

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the  
 dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your  
 church gath - ered to - day.

Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957  
 Music: CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT, Bernadette Farrell  
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## APOSTLE'S CREED

**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**

**P:** 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*

**P:** 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,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** 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,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** 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,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** 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,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** 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,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** 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,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** 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.

**C: Amen.**

### **THE SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**P:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

*Sit*

### **OFFERTORY**

### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

**P:** God of majesty,

**C: no eye has seen, no ear has heard what you have prepared for those who love you, yet in all we see, your Word reveals 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.**

### **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.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Stand*

## **BLESSING**

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

**C: Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

**P:** Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **SENDING HYMN: “We Are Marching in the Light of God” ELW #866**

**Vs. 1: We are marching in the light of God,  
we are marching in the light of God. (2x)**

**We are marching, (marching, we are marching, marching,  
we are marching in the light of God. (2x)**

**Vs. 2: Dancing**

**Vs. 3: Praying**

**Vs. 4: Singing**

## **POSTLUDE**