

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

9:15 AM Worship Express

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

Guest Preacher: Sandy Grant

Organist/Pianist: Michelle Bolstad

Lector: Anna Foltz

Acolyte: Sadie Soderling

Ushers: Steve Peterson

Technical Support: Thomas Lehr, Roger Slack

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

CONFession OF SINS:

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 [†] 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.

SONG OF PRAISE: “Love, Love, Love”

Vs. 1: Love, love, love! That's what it's all about!

**'Cause God loves us, we love each other,
mother, father, sister, brother.**

**Ev'rybody sing and shout,
'cause that's what it's all about!
It's about love, love, love!
It's about love, love, love!**

Vs. 2: Peace, peace, peace!

Vs. 3: Joy, joy, joy!

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.

Stand

GOSPEL SONG: “Open My Eyes”

**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...

Narrator: The Good News according to Matthew the 5th Chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 5:13-20

Narrator: ¹³ “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. ¹⁴⁻¹⁶ “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. ¹⁷⁻¹⁸ “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. ¹⁹⁻²⁰ “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.

Narrator: The Good News of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

CHILDRENS WORD/WORD

Stand

SONG OF THE WORD: “He Came Down”

He came down that we may have love; (4 times)
Hallelujah forever more.

Vs. 2: light Vs. 3: peace Vs. 4: joy

APOSTLE’S CREED

P: Do you believe in God the Father?

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

P: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord?

**C: 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.**

P: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**C: 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 THE PEOPLE

**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 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: 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

OFFERING SONG: “God Is So Good” #52 The Other Song Book

Vs. 1: God is so good. (3 times)
God's so good to me.

Vs. 2: God cares for me.

Vs. 3: I'll do God's will.

Vs. 4: God loves me so.

Vs. 5: God answers prayer.

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 \ddagger bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

DISMISSAL

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

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE