

# Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday, January 29, 2023

*An asterisk \* invites you to stand in body or in spirit,  
and you are invited to read responses found in **bold**.*

*Welcome to First Lutheran Church!*



## Gathering in God's Presence

**Prelude** — “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”

Setting by Walter Pelz

**Welcome**

**\*Gathering Hymn** — no. 532

“Gather Us In”

**\*Thanksgiving for Baptism**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
the fountain of living water,  
the rock who gave us birth,  
our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are  
clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give  
thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning you  
created us in your image and placed us in a  
well-watered garden.

**In the desert, you promised pools of water for  
the parched, and you gave us water from the  
rock.**

When we did not know the way, you sent the  
Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters. At the  
cross, you washed us from Jesus' wounded side,  
and on this day, you shower us again with the  
water of life.

**We praise you for your salvation through  
water, for the water in this font, and for all  
water everywhere.**

Bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love.  
Satisfy all who thirst, and give us the life only  
you can give.

**To you be given honor and praise through  
Jesus Christ, our living water, in the unity of  
the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.**

**\*Canticle of Praise** — *see Yellow Supplement, sing Stanza 2 only*

**\*Prayer of the Day**

May God be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray.

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.**

# Hearing & Responding to Scripture

## A Reading from the book of Isaiah — Isaiah 58:1-9a

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.  
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 delight to draw near to God.  
“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.  
Look, 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.

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?  
Will you call this a fast,  
a day acceptable to the Lord?  
Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?  
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?  
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator shall go before you,  
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.  
Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;  
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

The Light shines in the darkness, **and the darkness cannot overcome it.**

## Psalm 112:1-9 — *sung responsively by verse*



Hallelujah! Happy are they who | fear the Lord  
and have great delight in | God's commandments!  
**Their descendants will be mighty | in the land;**  
**the generation of the upright | will be blessed.**  
Wealth and riches will be | in their house,  
and their righteousness will | last forever.  
**Light shines in the darkness | for the upright;**  
**the righteous are merciful and full | of compassion.**  
It is good for them to be gener- | ous in lending  
and to manage their af- | fairs with justice.  
**For they will nev- | er be shaken;**  
**the righteous will be kept in everlast- | ing remembrance.**  
They will not be afraid of any | evil rumors;  
their heart is steadfast, trusting | in the Lord.  
**Their heart is established and | will not shrink,**  
**until they see their desire up- | on their enemies.**  
They have given freely to the poor, and their righteousness stands | fast forever;  
they will hold up their | head with honor.

## A Reading from Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians — 1 Corinthians 2:1-12

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish. But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,  
nor the human heart conceived,  
what God has prepared for those who love him”—

these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For what human being knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God.

The Light shines in the darkness, **and the darkness cannot overcome it.**

**\*Gospel Acclamation** — *see Yellow Supplement, refrain only (sung twice)*

**\*Gospel** — Matthew 5:13-20

The Gospel of Matthew, the 5th chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] “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.

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. 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.

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. 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. 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. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon** —

Pastor Chris Culuris

**\*Hymn** — no. 815

“I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”

## \*The Apostles' 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 power of 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

Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

Call your people to seek your wisdom in difficult conversations and action. Give the church everywhere courage to repent for the ways we have tolerated and practiced injustice, such as systemic racism, church sanction of colonialism, church protection of sexual abusers, and other ways the church has exercised abusive power over others. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Inspire our wonder at creation, from the light of dawn to the beauty of the dark night. Sustain the unseen depths of the ocean to the plants and animals we know well. Bring healing to lands and communities experiencing natural disasters. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Instruct the powerful in your ways. Provide upright leadership in business and industry, that workers are not oppressed. Throughout the world, inspire voters and raise up politicians to heed your call for nations to practice righteousness. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Loosen the bonds of injustice in our midst. Grant peace to endless quarrels, put an end to hunger, and break every yoke of oppression. Shelter all who flee abuse in their homes or violence in their communities. Satisfy those afflicted in any way. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Shape our congregation to be salt for the earth. Give us delight in your commandments, that we are generous with those in need. Make us steadfast in our trust in you, ready with tangible mercy and compassion for our neighbors. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

The cross and resurrection bring redemption from sin and death. We praise you for all whose unshaken faith in Christ shines forth in their witness. Keep them in our remembrance and bring us with them into the kingdom of heaven. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We bring to you our needs and hopes, O God, trusting your wisdom and power revealed in Christ. **Amen.**

## Offering

*Music at the Offering*  
"Abbot's Leigh"

Setting by Mark Sedio

# Sharing the Meal

\*Great Thanksgiving & Preface — see *Yellow Supplement*

\*“Holy, Holy, Holy” — see *Yellow Supplement*

## \*Words of Institution and The Lord’s Prayer

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.  
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

To our God of true justice, we pray the prayer Jesus taught us: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

## \*Invitation to Communion

Here is the table set for our special meal. The bread, the wine, prepared and presented. Ready to be served and shared.

We remember Jesus sharing a meal like this with his disciples, his friends.  
He included everyone, those he could trust and those he could not trust.

Today we are his disciples, his friends. Each one of us is welcome. How amazing it is to be loved and wanted even when we have not been perfect. How wonderful it is to be included as we are.

## Distribution of Communion

Communion Canticle — no. 1056, from *All Creation Sings*

“God Bless to Us Our Bread”

Ben - di - ce, Se - ñor, nues - tro pan, y da pan a los que tien - en  
God bless to . . us our . . bread, and give bread . . to all those who are

ham - bre y ham - bre de jus - ti - cia, a los que tien - en  
hun - gry, and hun - ger for jus - tice to those who are

pan. Ben - di - ce, Se - ñor, nues - tro pan.  
fed. God bless to . . . us our . . . bread.

Hymn — no. 715

“Christ, Be Our Light”

## Communion Blessing and Prayer

Holy One, we thank you for the healing that springs forth abundantly from this table. Renew our strength to do justice, love kindness, and journey humbly with you. Amen.

# Departing to Serve God's World

## Announcements

\***Sending Hymn** — no. 688

“Lord of Light”

## \***Benediction**

The God who faithfully brings forth justice and breaks the oppressor's rod  
✠ bless, strengthen, and uphold you, today and always. **Amen.**

## \***Dismissal**

Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus. **Thanks be to God!**

**Postlude** — “Christe, der du bist Tag und Licht”

Setting by Johann Pachelbel

*Christ, who art the light and day, you drive away the darkness of night,  
you are called the light of light, for you proclaim the blessed light.*

-Joseph Klug's *Geistliche Lieder*

## Acknowledgements

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## Worship Assistants

Pastor: Chris Culuris

Director of Music: Emily Bruflat

Audio/Video: Shanon Nowell, Jacob Little

Acolytes: Charlotte, Avery & Colton Loken

Greeter: Rebekah Roemhildt, Finley Olson

Reader: Sharon Malm

Ushers: Bill Kaut, Patric Pehrson

Communion Preparers: Shirb & John Sylvester

Communion Servers: Sharon Domier, John Holte

Bread Bakers: Diane Stewart, Michelle Doose,

Shirb Sylvester

## Announcements

- **All Congregation Meeting** TODAY in the Sanctuary after worship. At this important meeting the congregation will vote for representatives and approve the budget for 2023. Please be there as a quorum of 75 voting members is needed!
- A reminder to sign up for our “**First's Friends and Family Women's Retreat**” by TOMORROW, Jan. 30. The retreat will be held from 9:00am - 12:30pm next Saturday, Feb. 4th. Women high school age and older are invited to attend!

- **Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Sunday is next Sunday, February 5th.** Our guest preacher and presider at worship will be Pastor Scott Richards who serves St. Paul's and Trinity Lutheran Church in Gaylord, MN.
- Following worship next Sunday, Mary Spear and Amy Ronnkvist will lead a First Forum discussing what it means to be an RIC congregation.
- FLC will be collecting LED light bulbs for the month of February for the SPAFS! Please drop them off in the office.
- **LETTERS FOR COMPOST PICK-UP.** After worship on Sunday, February 12, you are invited to join the Green Committee at a letter-writing table, sending messages in support of local curbside pick-up of compostable materials, to St. Peter City Council members. Stationary and postage will be provided.

### **Prayers**

- We lift up prayers for those on our long-term list: Elgene Lund, Chuck Petry, Bob Cady, Joan Williams, Betty Gustafson, Myrene Bunge, Glenn Stryker, Erika Schuldt, Ursula McRostie, Karen Wendroth, Allen Storkson, Gene Roemhildt, Karen Smithers, Paul Aasen, and Shirley Storkson.
- We pray for the family of Shirly Strand, Joan Reschke, and all those mourning the recent loss of loved ones.
- We pray for Karen Smithers, who is recovering from hip surgery.
- We pray for Shirley Storkson, Shanon Nowell's mother-in-law, who is recovering from a broken hip.
- We pray for healing for all who are sick, for all victims of recent gun violence and for peace and unity throughout our nation and around the world.