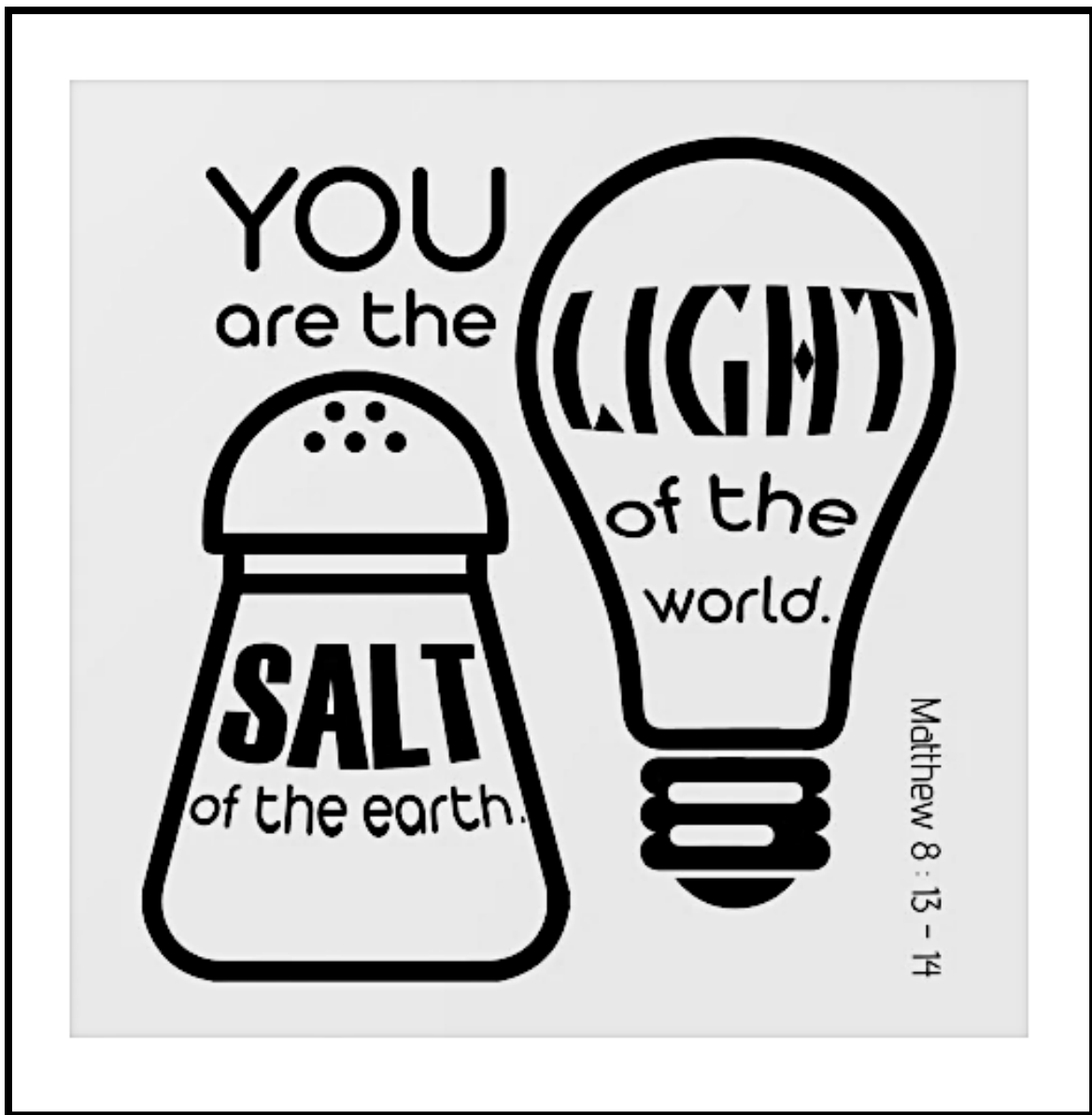


THE 5TH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

February 5th, 2023



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

140 Russell Avenue
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1
Church: 905-685-8294
www.christlutheransc.ca

Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday—9 a.m. – 12 noon
Bulletin Announcements: Please send to secretary@christlutheransc.ca.
Deadline for submission is Thursday at 9 a.m.

Pastor: Pastor Todd Hoeffs (289-362-0113) pastortoddhoeffs@gmail.com
Parish Assistant: Louise Gondosch (905-329-8579) parish.assistant@christlutheransc.ca
Business Manager: Karen McCumber business.manager@christlutheransc.ca
Secretary: Pat Kimpel secretary@christlutheransc.ca
Facebook: Lisa Gall www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC
Bulletin by email: Judy Mason chairman.outreach@christlutheransc.ca

A recording of Sunday's service will be uploaded to YouTube at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpING_TKTi9c_OIBbMqGwLw

Prayer: O God, our loving Father, through the grace of Your Holy Spirit You plant the gifts of Your love into the hearts of Your faithful people. Grant to Your servants soundness of mind and body, so that they may love You with their whole strength and with their whole heart do these things that are pleasing in Your sight; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen..

February Worship Schedule 2023

Sunday, Feb. 5: Epiphany 5: Scripture & Song Contemporary [Worship & Praise Team]
Sunday, Feb. 12: Epiphany 6: Creative Communion
Sunday, Feb. 19: Transfiguration: Gospel Melodies Service of the Word
Wednesday, Feb. 22: Ash Wednesday Simple Communion with Imposition of Ashes
Sunday, Feb. 26: Lent 1: Divine Service Setting 1 [without Communion]

DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:

Monday: Luke 12: 22-33 Wednesday: Jer. 5: 20-24 Friday: Rom. 7: 14-25a
Tuesday: Jer. 8: 4-7 Thursday: Acts 28: 1-6 Saturday: Hos. 2: 20-23

Musician: 10 a.m. – Praise Band
Reader: 10 a.m. – Howard Bogusat
Greeters: 10 a.m. – Ralph & Mary Muller

EVENTS THIS WEEK:

Today: 9:00 a.m. – Sunday School
9:10—9:40: Confirmation Class (*meet downstairs in youth room*)
Following Service: Youth Lunch, followed by “**Bowling/Arcade Social at Parkway Lanes**” (*see note below*)
Monday: 10-11:00 a.m. – Luther Manor Bible Study
7:30 p.m. - Choir Practice
Tuesday: 9:30 – 11:00 a.m. – Precious Moments
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m. - Church Council
Thursday: 10 -11:30 a.m. – SOUL
Sunday, Feb.12: 2:00 p.m. - Voter’s Meeting

SUNDAY SCHOOL: TODAY – We resume our regular schedule of meeting the first 2 Sundays of each month (Feb. 5th and 12th).

CONFIRMATION: TODAY - 9:10—9:40: Confirmation Class (*meet downstairs in youth room*)

All Youth & Confirmands—No snow! - so change in our plans! We will meet today following the service to enjoy lunch together and instead of tobogganing, we'll enjoy a fun afternoon of “**Bowling/Arcade at Parkway Social**”.
(Thursday, February 23rd at 7 p.m. is our next fun event----stay tuned)

PRECIOUS MOMENTS: If you or someone you know would benefit from friendly conversation, a time for kids to play & sing; hear a Bible story and make a craft - please join us Tuesdays in the nursery area. Coffee and tea are always on.

VISITATION AND FUNERAL INFORMATION: The following is the information we have regarding the funeral arrangements for Catherine Copp (McBride):

- **Visitation:** Wednesday, February, 8 2023, 4 – 7 p.m.
at Henry Walsler Funeral Home Ltd., 507 Frederick St., Kitchener, ON N2B 2A5.
- **Funeral Service:** Thursday, February 9, 2023, 1 p.m.
at St. John the Evangelist Church, 39 Henderson Street, Elora, ON N0B 1S0

If you plan on attending, please let Carole Pink know so she can give David a rough count on how many will be coming from the church. Thank you

VOTERS MEETING: Next Sunday, February 12 at 2:00 p.m. Main item for discussion and approval is the 2023 Congregational Budget.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY on Feb. 16th and March 9th will be held in the church proper.

MARY MARTHA: *The following is our Mary Martha Schedule for our Winter/Spring program:*

Feb 21st -- **Speaker from the Mobile Closet**

Our guest speaker will be Amy Whittaker, Program Manager. The Mobile Closet provides a free mobile shopping experience with each person choosing their own attire.

At the moment there is an "urgent need of the following items:

- **Men's pants (track pants and jeans)**
- **Men's Jackets**
- **Men's underwear (New)**
- **Women's Deodorant**
- **Blankets**

If you are cleaning out your closet and find any of the above items in good condition, we would welcome them in time for our meeting on February 21. *(Bring them in by Sunday, February 19th and leave them by the coat racks in the narthex.)* Thank you in advance!

- March 21: Quilt tying and stamp trimming
- April 18: Speaker-Jude Mersereau
- May 16: Bible Study--Pastor Todd (tentative)
- June 10: Potluck

Please feel free to attend any, or all, of our Tuesday night events!
(If you have any questions, call Lorraine at 905 964 5837)

BABY SHOWER - SUNDAY, FEB. 19, 3:00 – 5:00 pm: Here at the church, In honour of Daniela Cruz and Eduardo Farias. Eduardo is a MTS student at CLTS and an adopted student of the Mary Martha, which means that our LWML group supports them financially. They are also very talented musicians you have probably heard about. The baby is due in March and it is a girl. We would like to invite all of the ladies from the congregation to join us, everyone is welcome! One of the things on Daniela's list was a crib and the Mary Maratha has purchased one, so you may contribute to that (just give a donation to Ivy) or buy a small gift of your own to bring. Since it is their 1st baby they pretty much need everything. Please contact Lorraine Kaija if you think you might attend, (or one of the executive – Wendy H, Sue H, Ivy, Kathy or Carole) so we can plan numbers. If you would like to contribute to the appetizers for the afternoon, speak to Carole.

HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED JOINING THE CHOIR? Do you like to sing? We could always use more voices and would give you a hearty welcome. We will be starting up practices again on February 6th and each following Monday evening from 7:30 – 9 pm. We look now towards the Lenten season beginning on Ash Wednesday (Feb 22) and taking us into Holy Week in April. Speak to Carole if you might be interested.

| <u>Last Sunday Attendance:</u> | | <u>January 29th, 2023</u> | | <u>Attn: 10 a.m. – 98</u> | | <u>SOUL: 27</u> | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--|
| | <u>Budget</u> | <u>Weekly Need</u> | <u>Last Sunday</u> | <u>Year To Date</u> | <u>+ or – (--)</u> | | |
| Current: | | | 3,954.00 | 14,573.84 | | | |
| LCC Missions | | | 240.00 | 813.50 | | | |
| Property Improvement: | | | 119.00 | 355.50 | | | |

MEMORIAL DONATIONS have been given to HLMS Feeding Program in memory of Lorraine Bogusat by: Anna Schneikart, Glenn & Carole Pink, Tim & Elly Reck, Gary & Wendy Kuenzel, Frank & Ivy Parkhouse, Judy Slingerland, Pastor John & Linda Makey, Kent & Linda Schappert, Naomi Hohnberg, Steve Duga and Bernard Loewen; and to Alzheimer’s Society by James & Wendy Hyatt.

Review and Renew
Back to the Basics
What We Believe & Why It Matters
Lenten Focus 2023
Wednesdays Feb 22 – March 29 7-8 PM

- 1) Ash Wednesday Simple Communion & ashes - Purposeful praying or praying with purpose? [Lord's Prayer focus]
- 2) What does "Living Word" mean [10 Commandments focus]
- 3) What happens when I follow God's lead! [the Apostles' Creed focus]
- 4) Little Christ, little me [Baptism focus]
- 5) How our hearts and mouths align [Confession and Forgiveness focus]
- 6) You are what you eat [Holy Communion focus]

Midweek Lent will have hymns, prayer, Scripture and a Bible Study format message with discussion question time.
 We meet in the Church Sanctuary.

Holy Week & Easter will be the usual worship services

Lenten Study Material will be available, before Ash Wednesday, for all who wish to join.

Ash Wednesday will be a regular church service with Communion and imposition of ashes.

"Review & Renew" is a Bible Study which will be conducted by Pastor Todd in the church sanctuary the remaining Wednesdays of Lent

Holy Week will be regular church services.

Join the Fellowship Committee at 6:00 p.m. for a "FREE DINNER" every Wednesday of Lent, BEFORE the "Review & Renew" Bible Study at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome!



- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Wednesday, February 22: | Praise and Pizza |
| Wednesday, March 1: | Chili at Church |
| Wednesday, March 8: | Praise and Pizza |
| Wednesday, March 15: | Soup & Salvation |
| Wednesday, March 22: | Praise and Pizza |
| Wednesday, March 29: | Praise and Pasta |



GREETERS: A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board and we would ask that anyone who is interested in assisting for the coming year to please sign up. It is a wonderful opportunity to get to know everyone in the congregation.



+



What does Cheez Whiz have to do with downtown's St. George's Anglican Church?

Cheez Whiz sandwiches are just one of the breakfast options that are being served at St. George's every day, **365 days a year**, for over 25 years. Each morning a team of 6-8 volunteers arrives at 6:30 a.m. to make porridge, coffee, sandwiches and cereal for the many in our community who are unable to provide themselves with a nutritious breakfast.

These volunteers are not just members of St. George's. They manage the program but depend on many others from the community to help with the day-to-day preparation, as well as donations from many in order to feed the hungry.

Christ Lutheran Church has agreed to help by making February "Cheez Whiz" month. We will be collecting donations of jars of CheezWhiz (**LARGE SIZE PLEASE, +900g.**) to contribute to the pantry there. There will be a box in the narthex, starting next week, where you can place your donation.

If you prefer to donate \$20 or more and receive a tax receipt, place a cheque made out to St. George's Anglican Church in a separate envelope, and label it "for Breakfast Program", and put it in the offering plate. Make sure your name and address are included in order to get a tax receipt. The cheques will be taken to St. George's when the jars of CheezWhiz are delivered. You can also donate directly on their website: **stgeorgesanglican.ca** Click on "Contact" at top right and then go to bottom of screen where it says "Donate Now". Click on "Breakfast Program" where it says FUND and mention you are from Christ Lutheran Church in the message box.

Perhaps you want to help make and serve breakfast too. With as little a commitment as one morning a month to serving as a mentor once a week, there is a place for more help. If you might be interested in volunteering, **Speak to Wendy Kuenzel (289-990-4236) to get contact info.**

SCRIPTURE & SONG SERVICE

THE 5TH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

February 5, 2023 + 10 AM Worship

GATHERING

BEGINNING SONG:

"Take My Life & Let It Be"

LSB # 783 [Patmos]

**Take my life and let it be, consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days, let them flow in endless praise.**

**Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet and let them be -- swift and beautiful for Thee.**

**Take my voice and let me sing, always, only for my King.
Take my lips and let them be, filled with messages from Thee.**

**Take my will and make it Thine, It shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own, It shall be Thy royal throne.**

**Take my love, my Lord, I pour, at Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself and I will be, ever, only, all for Thee.**

Reprinted from: www.library.timelesstruths.org/music/Take_My_Life_and_Let_It_Be/

WE BEGIN IN GOD'S NAME

In the name of the Father, and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

I was glad when they said to me,

Let us go to the House of the Lord!

Unless the Lord builds the House,

In vain do the builders labour.

Surely the Lord is in this place.

This is the House of God, this is the Gate of Heaven!

You are gracious and merciful, O God,

Slow to anger, rich in love.

Receive our prayers and worship as You have promised

And uphold us by Your Spirit,

Until all things, mended by Your mercy,

Are made whole and well in You,

Through Jesus Christ

Our healer and our hope. Amen.

KYRIE--PRAYING FOR MERCY

John Newton, 1779

arr. Edwin O. Excell (1851-1921), alt.

Have mer - cy on Your peo -- ple, Lord; have

mer - cy Je -- sus Christ; have mer --- cy on Your

peo --- ple, Lord; have mer - cy grant us peace.

Lyrics: Kyrie text; A. Meade, 1975 © Creative Communications for the Parish

Musical notation: Amazing Grace <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/An-Analysis-of-'-Amazing-Grace-'-Thornely-Thornely/d3498a752ca06c27e107c07d837494c05cda12b0>

CONFESSION OF SINS & FORGIVENESS

To You, O Lord God,

All hearts are open, to You all desires are fully known. We come to You, moved by Your Word and Spirit, as sinners, confessing our sins. Forgive us in Your mercy. Remember us in Your love. Show us Your way, teach us Your path, lead us in truth and faithfulness, for the sake of our neighbour and for Your sake, O Lord God, in the hope of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

By water, Word and Spirit, our God gives you new birth and through the death and resurrection of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in His name and in His stead, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

When the Son sets you free, you are free indeed!

Praise be to God!

HYMN OF PRAISE

"Shout To The Lord"

My Jesus, my Saviour -- Lord there is none like You
All of my days I want to praise
The wonders of Your mighty love
My comfort, my shelter -- Tower of refuge and strength
Let ev'ry breath all that I am -- never cease to worship You

Chorus:

Shout to the Lord, all the earth -- let us sing
Power and majesty -- Praise to the King
Mountains bow down and the seas will roar
At the sound of Your name
I sing for joy at the work of Your hands
Forever I'll love You, forever I'll stand
Nothing compares to the promise I have in You.

Chorus repeat

CCLI Song # 1406918 -- Darlene Zschech. © 1993 Wondrous Worship (Admin. by Music Services, Inc.) For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com -- CCLI License # 775293

GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Hear my prayer O Lord, **Listen to my call for help.**

We 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 strength to do them. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE

The Old Testament: *Isaiah 58: 3-9a*

Why have we fasted, and you see it not? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it? Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure, and oppress all your workers. Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to hit with a wicked fist. Fasting like yours this day will not make your voice to be heard on high. Is such the fast that I choose, a day for a person to humble himself? Is it to bow down his head like a reed, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the LORD? "Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps 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 him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Epistle: *1 Corinthians 2: 1-12*

[St. Paul writes]: And when I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of humans but in the power of God. Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, 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 hearts of humanity imagined, 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 who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SUNG GOSPEL VERSE:

“Halle, Halle, Halle”

[Caribbean melody]

**Halle, halle, halle—lujah.
Halle, halle, halle—lujah.
Halle, halle, halle—lujah.
Hallelu-jah, hal-lelu-jah.**

The Holy Gospel: *St. Matthew 5: 13-17*

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew, the 5th chapter:

Glory to You, O Lord.

[Jesus says:] “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet. “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, 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 who is in heaven. “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. This is the Gospel of the Lord.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ!

THE APOSTLES’ CREED

God has made us His people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess the faith.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the + life everlasting. Amen.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

GOSPEL SONG:

"May The Peoples Praise You"

Words and Music by
Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty,
Stuart Townend, Ed Cash
and David Zimmer



1. You have called us out of dark - est night, in -
(2. May our) ev - 'ry breath re - tell the grace that
(3. All the) earth is Yours and all with - in, each
(4. May the) seeds of mer - cy grow in us for
(5. This our) ho - ly priv - 'lege to de - clare Your



-to Your glo - rious light, that we may sing the won - ders of the
broke in - to our strife with bound - less love and deep - est joy, with
har - vest is Your own, and from Your hand we give to You, to
those who have not heard, may songs of praise build lives of grace to
prais - es and Your Name to ev - 'ry na - tion, tribe and tongue Your



ris - en Christ. 2. May our life. May the peo - ples
end - less known. 4. May the Word.
make Christ Your pro - claim.
'spread Your church



praise You, let the na - tions be - glad! All Your bless - ing comes that we may



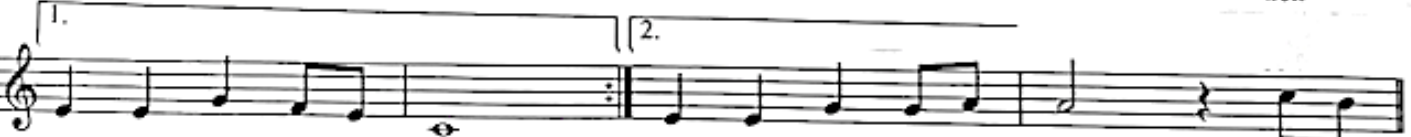
praise, may praise the Name of Je - sus.



3. All the Je - sus. Ho - ly,
5. This our Ho - ly.



Ho - ly, is the Lord Al - might - y. Wor - thy, wor - thy
Ho - ly, is the Lord Al - might - y. All cre - a - tion



is the Lamb who was slain, praise Your glo - ri - ous Name. May the

peo - ples praise You, let the na - tions be — glad! All Your
 bless - ing comes that we may praise, may praise the Name of — Je - sus. May the
 peo - ples praise You, let the na - tions be — glad! All Your bless - ing comes that
 we may praise, may praise the Name of — Je -
 -sus.

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MESSAGE

OFFERINGS *are gathered*

OFFERING SONG:

“Give Thanks”

Henry Smith © 1978

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One;
 give thanks,
 because he’s given Jesus Christ, his Son.
 Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One;
 give thanks,
 because he’s given Jesus Christ, his Son.
 And now let the weak say ‘I am strong’,
 let the poor say ‘I am rich’,
 because of what the Lord has done for us;
 and now let the weak say ‘I am strong’,
 let the poor say ‘I am rich’,
 because of what the Lord has done for us.
 Give thanks...give thanks-----!

<https://www.music-ministry.org/hymns/give-thanks-with-a-grateful-heart/>

PRAYERS

We pray now to our Gracious Father, for the world in which we are called to let our light shine; for the people who will see our good deeds; and for the church in which the light of the gospel is proclaimed.
Hear us O God – Your mercy is great.

Provide faithful pastors to share your good news and to teach your ways. Strengthen the faith of your people through Your Word and Baptism, Forgiveness and Communion. Bless the members of our congregation that they may be salt and light in the world. Bring to faith those who do not yet know you.
Hear us O God – Your mercy is great.

Have mercy on all nations, and bless our own land. Be the comforter to war-torn communities where violence and oppression reign. Bring honesty and justice, peace and safety everywhere. Bless and protect people in work and leisure.
Hear us O God -- Your mercy is great.

You know every hair on our heads. Yet we do not always know each of our neighbours. Equip and ignite our outreach, inviting and welcoming efforts and help us know all those living around us, even those in our midst, who benefit from Christ in us.
Hear us O God -- Your mercy is great.

Pour out Your Holy Spirit on all who struggle, especially.....Ease the pain of families enveloped in abuse or division. Give Your life-giving breath to fellowship, conversations and the coming and going of people, that we may be ready to offer our hands, feet, ears, mouths and hearts to serve all who cry out for help.
Hear us O God -- Your mercy is great.

Comfort those who are suffering, downcast or oppressed. Lift up the fallen and satisfy the needs of the hungry, refugees, the homeless and those who lack even basics such as clothing. Help all who are in any trouble.
Hear us O God – Your mercy is great.

Your love knows no bounds. May Your perfect love strengthen our own ability to love and include into our lives those who need and inspire us. May our days be a time to comfort those You have given us to love and remember this as a witness to the faith and love only You can provide.
Hear us O God – Your mercy is great.

Father, your Son is the light shining in the darkness of our world. Teach us to love one another as you love us, so that we may bring peace and joy to the world. Hear our prayers, for the sake of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

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. 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

CLOSING PRAYER FOR THE WORD:

Blessed Lord God, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Help us so that we may hear, read, mark, learn and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your Holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray, Who with the Father and Spirit You rule and reign as one God, now and forevermore. Amen.

THE BLESSING

Jesus is the great Shepherd of the sheep. May you hear His voice and keep His Word.

Amen, thanks be to God.

Jesus is the Pathway that leads to life. May You follow in His narrow way. **Amen, praise be to God.**

Jesus is the Vine and we are the branches. May you be rooted and grounded in His Word and love.

Amen. Glory to our God.

May the Almighty God, the Father, Son + and Holy Spirit, bless and keep you now and always.

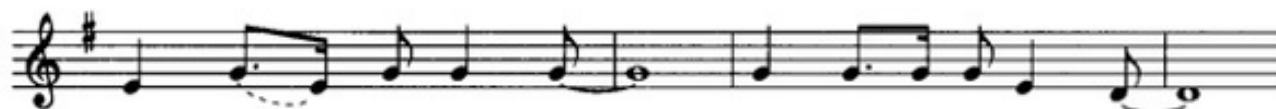
Amen.

SENDING SONG "This Little Light Of Mine"

www. Hymnary. org



1 This lit - tle light of mine I'm gon-na let it shine,



This lit - tle light of mine I'm gon-na let it shine,



This lit - tle light of mine I'm gon-na let it shine,



Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine---|

2 Je-sus gave it to me, I'm gonna let it shine;
Je-sus gave it to me, I'm gonna let it shine;
Je-sus gave it to me, I'm gonna let it shine;
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

3 Hide it under a bushel, no - I'm gonna let it shine;
Hide it under a bushel, no - I'm gonna let it shine;
Hide it under a bushel, no - I'm gonna let it shine;
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

4 Sat-an can't blow it out - I'm gonna let it shine;
Sat-an can't blow it out - I'm gonna let it shine;
Sat-an can't blow it out - I'm gonna let it shine;
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

5 Ev'rywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine;
Ev'rywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine;
Ev'rywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine;
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

Text: African-American spiritual

Tune: African-American spiritual; harm. by Horace Clarence Boyer, © 1992

REV. TODD HOEFFS
EPIPHANY 5
Scripture: St. Matthew 5:13-17
“Salty Shining Serving”
February 5, 2023

I've never been salty foods kind of guy. Until recently. Sugar is more my taste.

The sweeter the better. Salty as savory has its place. Salt enhances flavours.

Too much salt on any food item can cause problems with health. Too little can be unhealthy as well.

Too little salt or too little light in our Christian faith is problematic. Dark gloomy weather with overcast skies lacking sun can cause depression. We need the light.

We need the salt. We need to be salt and light. You, the baptized believer, the follower of Jesus, you are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world. Jesus says so. Your salt flavours and your light shines in front of all people so that your good works are made visible to people

and in the end, God is praised! All you are and do as images of Jesus' salt and light brings God the glory. Salt seasons and preserves. It works hiddenly, and you don't need terribly much of it to make a big difference. Just a bit sprinkled here and there, and a meal is enhanced. You are not the main dish. That's Jesus. He's the Meal, the focus, the meaning of life. You're salt. You're seasoning,

scattered as Jesus' witnesses throughout the earth, seasoning your little corner of life with the death and resurrection message of Jesus which is what makes you salty. Lose that, and you lose your saltiness, which makes you tasteless. Lose the Gospel, neglect the death and resurrection of Jesus for the saving hope of every person, and you're left with nothing more than bland religion.

Bland religion is easy. It allows us to be involved on our own terms. Do as we wish or feel or want...And that inward focus makes us blind to real needs – Needs for others, needs for our own selves. Satisfying selfish ways always leads to wanting power and control. Salt is small and numerous and often unseen, yet effective. God does not call us and choose us to promote ourselves But rather be a subtle, humble attraction. Just set the Light on a lamp stand and if it shines, if it gives light, if its visible, People will see and come. Very different than what we're used to seeing in the world around us. Christians always feel they can move the world by being in control?! That we can move our futures when we are in control. Jesus warns AGAINST this.

If we just have all the power then--- no. It's never been true. Power always leads to corruption.

Because power only wants more power. Look at the ruling Kings when the Scriptures had been written. Not a single one was without some grab for power or corruption. And still, it's in that Scripture that our faith finds itself and its influence. When we must wrestle with faith and how God leads us, When we concern ourselves with living as salt and light – then the Holy Spirit and faith moves us forward. If we just sit and wait to be entertained....If we don't believe we receive anything of value here, Then we've lost the vision and mission and purpose of why we gather.

Jesus doesn't need us to be in control or powerful Or just doing what we feel like --Simply give the world taste and flavour....Live as quiet effective salt and light. When we look over the last 50 – 100 years in our own Lutheran church bodies, We can see times when the salt and light was not fervent. History shows a reliance on a European immigration to fill churches. What happened when that stopped? Very little fervent salt and light witness outwardly. Nothing kills salt and light better than status quo and boring ruts. There's no golden era of Christianity. There's no magic plot to fix the story. Today is the best day. Because, as Jesus warns, If salt loses zing, hope grows dim.

If believers in Christ look and act no different than anyone else, Salt is losing its taste. Then we in the church capitulate to the same fears, The same biases, the same anger, the same apathy

As everyone else. If we are no more than the normal motivations of common religion and politics,

Then we may as well be thrown out and trampled underfoot. We fear salt, we fear light.

It's not controllable. It's hard to measure how much of each is needed. Salt can hurt when rubbed into a wound. Light can blind a person and make them never want to see again. The Gospel can put us at odds with those who want hard and fast rules or easy answers or trouble-free living.

Jesus doesn't promise that. He promises to enter into our pain and lead us through it,

either to a safe place on earth or a safe place with him in Heaven. Let me tell you, that message stings, even stings us. And yet, salt and light is who and what we are. It's what the church is supposed to be about. When Jesus calls us salt and light in this section of His sermon on the mount, He's teaching the disciples and believers among the crowds that have followed him from Galilee –the ten cities known as the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

That means they've come from everywhere. They've come to listen and learn, to be healed,

and to have their lives put back together. They've come in search of meaning, direction, and purpose. Salt is that purpose. Light is our direction. We are baptized into this direction.

We season and transform human activity in such a way that it reveals Jesus in this world.

We're here to help people better see Jesus' life in their own life. We're to shine a light into the dark corners where most people like to hide out. Light reveals the truth. Light is honest.

Light leads and guides, showing the way.

- Like looking another in the eyes, speaking a kind word, and receiving them as a fellow person loved by Jesus. . Especially with someone you've labeled as a waste of your time, a panhandler, a complainer, a lazy co-worker.
- Or generosity with your compassion, time, and resources to care for and make a difference in the lives of people in need.
- Starting a conversation and rebuilding a relationship when what you mostly feel is indifference, pain, or anger.
- It is faithfulness and commitment to others shown by listening, being available, and spending time. It would mean slowing down, rearranging your schedule, and valuing presence over efficiency and productivity.
- It is loving God, your neighbour, your enemy, and yourself. It means needs overcomes wants.

This is salt and light living as Christ every day.

Its being Jesus' true crucified and resurrected Body when we are encountering people in the daily world.

In this way -- *"Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."*

That is both the good news and the challenge, to believe and become what we already are.

To embrace our life in Jesus as always changing and always comforting. Always full and overflowing with mercy, forgiveness and grace. You and me as salt and light is the fulfillment of Jesus' earthly work. His Gospel message keeps on transforming. His Body and Blood strengthens our resolve with more salt and more light. Holy Communion not only makes us aware of ourselves and what we receive, but aware of others near us who receive the same gift. Aware is our call.

Salty shiny serving. Flavour and Radiance. Amen.